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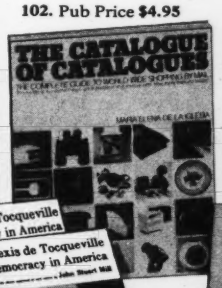

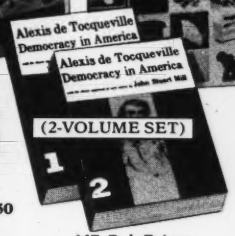

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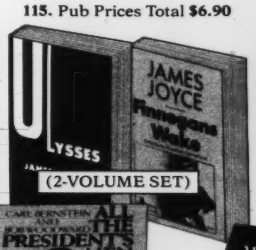

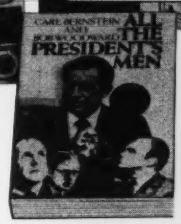

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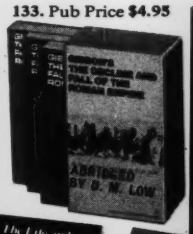

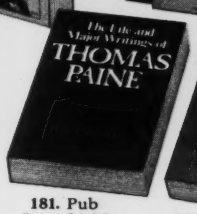

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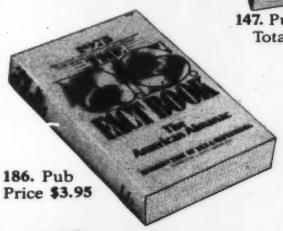

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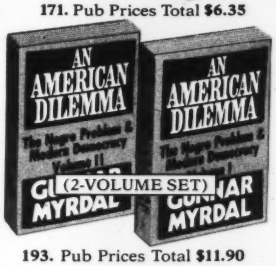

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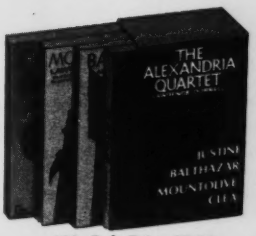

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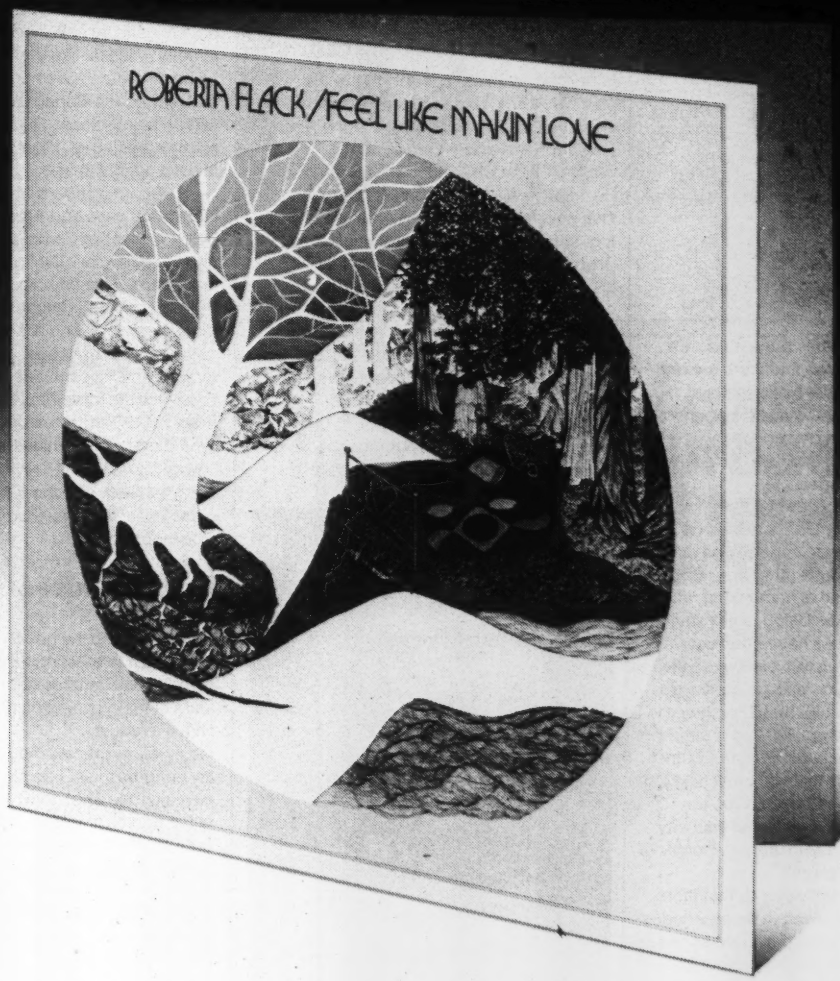

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LETTERS

Totally ignored

The violence and death in Southern Lebanon has been almost totally ignored by the United States press until your publication of Judith Coburn's article, "Israel's ugly little war" (March 7). You are to be commended for your courage in doing so, since I know the kind of abuse you are in for as a result of it. A great many people do not want the story told.

Having seen some of the destruction of Southern Lebanon first-hand, and knowing many of the people who are trying to live there, I am especially grateful for the insight Ms. Coburn's story gives to their lives.

James Abourezk
United States Senate

From the Talmud

Judith Coburn has done all of us a service by reminding us that there are real flesh-and-blood people living in the Palestinian villages in Southern Lebanon; but she has done us a disservice by evoking "Vietnam" as a model of the Israeli attacks on those villages.

First the service: the Talmud explains that the Holy One, blessed be He, created the human race through one person in order to teach us that killing one human being is like killing all of humankind, and that saving one human being is like saving all of humankind. Jews have been very practical about this vision: elsewhere the Talmud says that if someone is coming to kill you, you may kill him first. (For thus you save one human being.) *But this is aimed only at the would-be killer himself.* For the Talmud also teaches that you must not kill an innocent person, not even if you are ordered to kill him by the ruler of your city, not even to save your own life. . . "for is not his blood as red as yours?"

Coburn has reminded us that there are innocent people living in those villages whose blood when spilled is quite as red as ours. Israel must and should protect herself and her people against those who come to kill; but bombing villages is not a necessary, not an effective and not a legitimate way to do this. Those who have called Coburn's article anti-Semitic have forgotten that Jewish tradition itself teaches that all the children of Adam deserve to live, unless they individually come to kill. What Coburn has done is to make these Palestinian children of Adam so vivid, so much mothers, farmers, schoolboys, that we cannot reduce them to a formula: "PLO," "terrorists." And by doing this she calls forth both sorrow and—of course— fury.

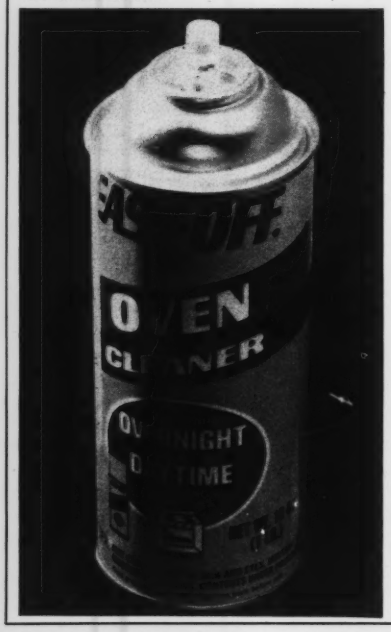
"Of course" because those who respond with fury are responding out of a deep, and understandable, frustration and fear. And Coburn has done us the disservice of using analogies and language that obscure the origin of that frustration and fear. No doubt she is right in perceiving that the Palestinians in those villages feel like "Vietnamese"—that is, the baffled targets of indiscriminate attack from a foreign power that wants to deny them their right to national self-determination. But the Israelis *also* feel like Vietnamese, by the same definition. "Vietnam" means to all of us America-the-Superpower-versus-tiny-Vietnam. But when *both* sides are tiny, besieged, frightened—"Vietnam" is not a helpful image.

So what should we do? Would that there were Jews and Arabs ready to join in calling upon both Israel and the PLO to end the letting of blood and to recognize Israeli and Palestinian peoplehoods and rights of self-determination. Would that there were Jews and Arabs ready to join in calling for a moratorium on all violence by Israelis and Palestinians—even for just 30 days—so the triple-locked door between them could be pushed open just a crack. Would that—but maybe there are?

Arthur I. Waskow
Resident Fellow of the
Institute for Policy Studies
Washington, D.C.

Correction: EASY OFF does not contain fluorocarbons

We erroneously reported in the March 7, 1975, issue of *New Times* in an article entitled "What's Being Done About Those Killer Aerosol Cans?" that EASY-OFF® Oven Cleaner, a product of Boyle-Midway, Inc., contains fluorocarbon. This statement was based on a report from a qualified laboratory. The manufacturer, Boyle-Midway, Inc., advised us that its EASY-OFF® Oven Cleaner does not contain any fluorocarbon. This has been confirmed by a further test by the same laboratory which has now advised us that its earlier report was erroneous. We are happy to make this correction and sincerely regret that EASY-OFF® Oven Cleaner was mistakenly included among the products referred to in the above identified article.



Worthy causes

Keep up the good work. *New Times* is the most interesting magazine I read, though some articles depress me when I learn of things going on in this world today. I have a request.

Many articles motivate me to write my congressman. I do not do so because I have no idea what good my letter would do or the person to write to. Perhaps you could publish some information explaining the degree of effectiveness, the system and a listing of congressmen's addresses. This would, on my part, and surely for many others, result in the writing of many letters for worthy causes.

Thomas C. Vickstrom
Amherst, Massachusetts

Editor's Note: Your congressman's name and address is Silvio Conte, 239 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. Congressman Conte says he will be delighted to hear from you.

Spray-on solution

Have you no faith in American capitalism? In your article on aerosol cans ("Not with a bang, but with a psssst!" March 7) you seem to underestimate the ingenuity of the American industrialists. Sure, aerosol cans may slowly be attacking the vital ozone, but so what? When it reaches a critical point, I'm certain that some large chemical company will probably come out with a lotion that we can use to protect ourselves from the fatal sun rays . . . and it'll probably come in an aerosol can so that we can conveniently spray it on.

Terry Huston
Soledad, California

Why is the simple solution always impossible for us? If everyday people would simply give up the novelty of spray cans, perhaps the world wouldn't be made to end in my lifetime. For my part, I'll never buy another one, and I'm sure I'll survive.

Keats Tyler
Sherman Oaks, California

Thank you for your article on aerosol and ozone. Maybe after your article and a few more like it, we can form an effective pressure group . . . made of people who want to be alive in 2001. Maybe the movie *Space Odyssey* isn't as much fiction as we'd like to think.

Liz Rank
Park Forest South, Illinois

Conversation piece

Please pass along my congratulations to everyone concerned for the Robert Sam Anson black politicians piece ("The new hustlers," February 21). It's the kind of article that people will be talking about for years.

Charles Peters, Editor
The Washington Monthly

Revealed

It's about time the public knew the *real* Allen Funt ("Candid compulsive," March 21). I worked for Allen for six weeks, as his secretary, and I must honestly tell you that Daniel Klein's article tells it all, in truthful living color—the paranoia, mistrust and exploitation of people. It's all real, except, if I may say so, I believe Mr. Klein was almost too kind.

Name withheld on request
New York, New York

Correction

In an article entitled "Marina del Oz" in the issue of *New Times* dated February 21, 1975, reference was made to an LSD party at Marina del Rey. The person identified as Pete the Pilot in the article was not R. Peter Lappin, who claims he was not at the party.

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FIAT

What's new in outer space?

SLOW DOWN

By James S. Kunen

I remember, as a child, watching Walt Disney programs that detailed how the United States would in the future land men on the moon, and build space stations, and launch robot explorers, and generally leave no stone unturned in the Universe until we cracked the Case. I was all for it. I remember that. Everyone was.

Now, all that was envisioned has come to pass. And you don't hear much about Outer Space anymore.

WHAT'S NEW IN OUTER SPACE?

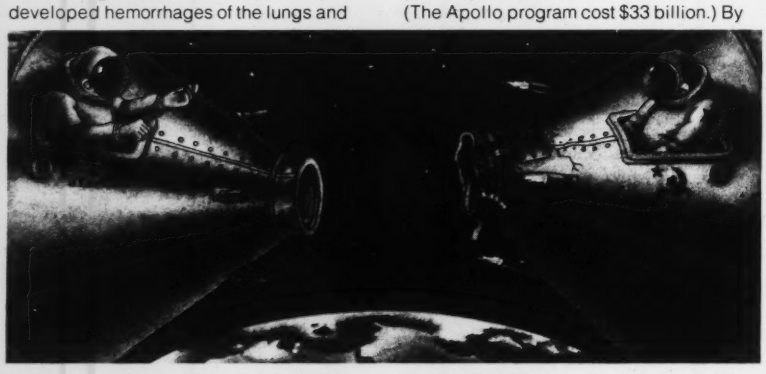
Thanks to examining obscure journals with an assiduousness admirable even in one with nothing better to do, I am able to answer that question. You are reading an unusual article. This isn't something about Robert Redford or the recession. This is the Cosmic News.

I *know* you don't care. What with the hard times on the ground, NASA's $3.2 billion budget's got them on everybody's enemies list. But they're just doing their job. Somebody's got to look for life on Mars. Amaze your friends. Confound your enemies. Study the following space roundup. There'll be a question at the end.

NASA launched 19 missions during 1974, including a couple of Western Union satellites that are supposed to cut domestic communications costs by 50 percent someday. Two Landsat observation satellites are in "500 mile, near-polar, sun-synchronous orbits, 180° out of phase," to provide "repetitive program coverage" over every portion of the earth. (Space language is dry and technical, but how should it be? If you want a flight of fancy, call a poet.) They look for mineral resources, follow fish, monitor range fires, forecast weather, keep track of icebergs. One even busted a polluter near Duluth. You can see *everything* from up there. (If you want to be the first on your quadrant to have a satellite photo of your own hometown, write Eros Data Center, Sioux Falls, S.D.)

Deep-space exploration is being carried out by unmanned satellite probes. Mariner 10 reached Venus in February '74, then used that planet's "sling-shot effect" to get to Mercury in March '74. It made another pass within 195 miles of Mercury last week. Pioneer 10, which flew by Jupiter in '73, is the first man-made object to head out of the solar system into interstellar space. Scientists will be able to pick up its signals to a point about 2 billion miles away, somewhere between Neptune, which it will pass in 1983, and Pluto, which is on the timetable for 1987. Pioneer 11, a 570-pound robot explorer, completed a two-year trek to Jupiter in December, and "imaged" the planet (NASA talk for taking pictures) from 29,000 miles away, revealing that the Jovian weather was pretty much the same this year as it was last year. Jupiter's gravity accelerated the spacecraft to 106,000 miles an hour, kicking it toward Saturn, which it will reach in September 1979. Note that on your perpetual calendar: it's going to take pictures *inside* the rings.

The Russians, meanwhile, have subjected albino rats to gamma radiation in orbit. A large number of them (the rats) developed hemorrhages of the lungs and became "apathetic and less brisk." We've got a joint project coming up with them (the Russians) in July. An American and a Russian spacecraft will rendezvous and dock, and the Russians will climb in with the Americans and spend several days in zero-gravity détente. So far, American spacemen are pretty unhappy with the deal. The Russkis, in their inimitable fashion, seem to be taking us for a ride: they've been looking over our space facilities, but they've been keeping theirs under wraps. And in a practice mission last September, it became apparent that they didn't know *how* to dock.



In August giant new Titan 3-E Centaur rockets will blast two Viking spacecraft to soft-landings on Mars, where, barring a grandstand play by some foreigners in the meantime, they will be the first working scientific stations. The first lander is scheduled to touch down on Mars on—ready?—July 4, 1976. It will scoop up soil, drop it into an organic broth and see if any bacteria grow—all for $990 million.

In 1978 we're sending an unmanned orbiter and three small landing craft to Venus.

All manned flight for the next 10 years will be confined to earth orbit. The space shuttle, a $40 billion project scheduled to become operational in 1980, will be able to carry a 65,000-pound payload into orbit, and return for more. Nine European countries are developing a Spacelab, carried into orbit by the shuttle, which will allow non-astronaut scientists to work in space.

In the speculative realm Gerard K. O'Neil of Princeton says we could have a space colony with a population of 10,000 in place by 1988 at a cost of $30.7 billion. (The Apollo program cost $33 billion.) By the year 2050, emigration to space colonies could reverse the rise in earth's population, says O'Neil, who is not a sci-fi novelist.

That's the roundup: nothing new.

Why don't we care about this stuff? Is space of no importance? Is the void null?

It's true space launches have become routine. There are now 1,000 spacecraft and parts of spacecraft orbiting the earth. Too, our astronauts don't make very good heroes. They insist on debasing themselves—doing TV ads and running for the Senate. But beyond that, the great rocketships fail to ignite our interest because we think they hold no promise for us. (This despite our culture's taboo against debunking technology—your mother didn't raise you to say, "It'll never fly, Orville.") It's not that we think the future lies elsewhere. WE THINK THE FUTURE LIES.

Farewell, Tomorrowland. ●

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Like Mighty Mouse, we are small but powerful feisty. Out of all proportion to size, we make waves. Strike fear in evil hearts. Give the tremble to fat cats. Shake the rafters. The Mouse that Roars, that's us.

Some recent roars.

Every two weeks, NEW TIMES comes along with a stick or two of dynamite In its fist.

There was our story on "The Ten Dumbest Congressmen," with NEW TIMES' nomination for King of Dumb. You should have heard the screams on that one, including a well-attended press conference called by the King himself. There was "Prescription Payola," about doctors who are willing to risk your life for a color TV. There was "Southie Is My Home Town," a look at the people of South Boston you didn't find in any of the other media. (After a century of getting the shaft, maybe they had reasons for coming off as brawling racists.)

In "The Little Camera That Couldn't," NEW TIMES dissected Polaroid's SX-70, as a symbol of a consumer economy gone wild. In "A Wallace Is a Wallace Is a Wallace," we looked underneath the new moderate George and found—guess what—the same old George. In "Happy Days Are Here Again," we saw the new depression as upbeat—a chance for new lifestyles and the whole Whole Earth thing. In "Zen and the Art of the Perfect Backhand," we told you how to trust your body and ignore your old tennis instructor.

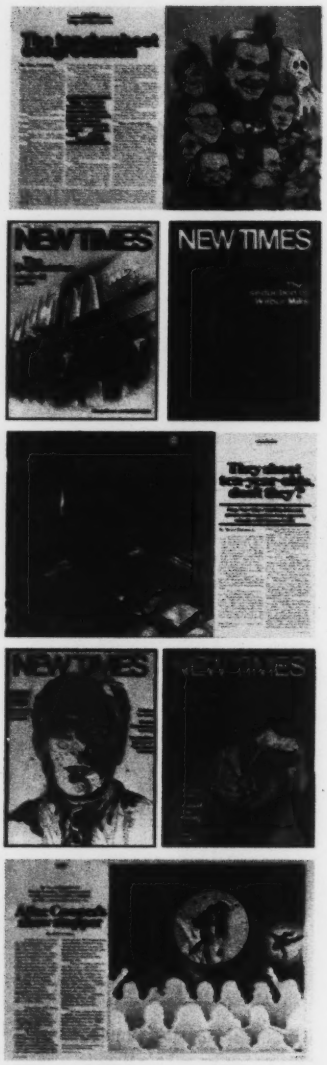
"The Gourmet Freeze-Out" ripped the foil off the big restaurant rip-off that's serving up mass-produced frozen dishes as expensive house specialties. "The Consulting Con Game" laid bare a cushy professorial racket. "They Shoot Ten-Year Olds, Don't They?" was a heartwarming look at New York's shootin' cops with their 007 license to kill just about anybody they want to. "That Championship Season" stripped the cover-up from the sex scandal that decimated Notre Dame's football team.

Is NEW TIMES mad all the time?

Golly, no. Don't get the idea we do nothing but dredge up embarrassing facts and tweak important noses. NEW TIMES is *the magazine of what's happening* and that's a spectrum that includes love and music and lifestyles and movies and all manner of rare new ideas. For instance, we reported on Erhard Seminars Training (est), one of the most fascinating of the new life therapies. We got inside the world of bisexuality. We published our *own* medical research on pot—"Attention: Smoking Grass May Be Good for Your Health."

And of course we continue to report on the eternal battle of The Little Guys vs. The Big Guys. Like the story on Sam Lovejoy, who toppled the big bad nuclear tower. And the young hillbillies of Mendocino County who were damned if they'd let their houses be torn down for lack of city plumbing.

Our bright, brash, talented writers and columnists—like Robert Sam Anson, Jesse Kornbluth, Marcia Seligson, Larry King, Amanda Spake, Jim Kunen, Mark Goodman, Frank Rich, Janet Maslin and Nina Totenberg—have one thing in common. They're unafraid. They'll plunge into anything, take chances and stands, crawl way out on limbs. Sure, NEW TIMES may fall on its face sometimes. But never on its knees!



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NEW TIMES

The Mouse that Roars

Canned worms

FULMINATIONS

By Larry L. King

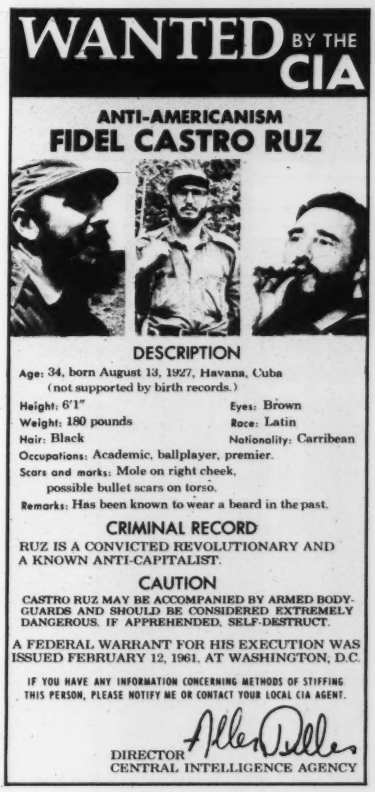
The more the can is opened, the more worms are spilled: we now have the word of two former aides to the late Robert Kennedy that our CIA functionaries made such a pact with the Devil as to actually award the Mafia a "hit" contract on Fidel Castro.

Lyndon Johnson long privately opined that John F. Kennedy had been assassinated in retaliation of American efforts to kill Castro. As this information leaked in political and journalistic circles, many of us refused to believe. After all, late in his reign LBJ growled that he could not trust even his intimates; bad dreams of his own violent death followed him into retirement; he became convinced that the TV networks were communist-dominated. It all seemed but the pathetic gabble of a bitter, disappointed man: one who—worried about his place in history and resenting his reluctant abdication—had adopted the protective colorations of classic paranoia. In the Castro-Kennedy example, at least, it now appears that maybe ole Lyndon wasn't all that crazy.

CIA tracks long have been rumored near the assassinated remains of Leftists (Lumumba in the Belgian Congo, Allende in Chile, Che Guevara in Bolivia), those who flirted with them (Trujillo in the Dominican Republic) or even those formerly "friendly" leaders—as with Diem in South Vietnam—who had become embarrassing liabilities in our alleged common causes. Now we learn of the "hit" contract on Cuba's Castro even as information surfaces of when the CIA planned to assist in the killing of "Papa Doc" Duvalier in Haiti. Though Arbenz in Guatemala, Sukarno in Indonesia and Sihanouk of Cambodia escaped with their lives, the CIA clearly assisted in overthrowing their respective governments; judging by that tip of the iceberg we have seen, one must conclude that had these not gone quietly, then they, too, might literally have lost their heads.

These are dismal and astounding revelations to Americans nurtured on the belief that our system and our tradition honors ballots over bullets. We cannot easily accommodate the notion that the CIA—heavily peopled by Establishmentarian "Old Boys" from the Ivy League, "the best and the brightest" in David Halberstam's term—has so easily and coldly made unholy alliances with mercenaries, cheap adventurers and Mafia thugs in the name of doing Democracy's work. Though we enjoy or promote the smug absolute that we are the world's richest and freest and most favored nation, events are forcing us to face up to the inhumanities and chaos and terror our so-called agents increasingly have sponsored around the world.

It is not enough to be told in rebuttal that "the other side" plays dirty: that the Russians, the Chinese, or the Hottentots have equally stained themselves in committing their own international outrages. To the extent, yes, that we must gather intelligence so as to avoid nuclear Pearl Harbors or otherwise maintain a prudent alert, then—one reluctantly agrees—we realistically must condone a given amount of spying, peeking and spooking abroad; such is the disorderly state of the world community, where ambitious superpowers encounter conflicts of will causing them to reach for their gun belts.


WANTED BY THE CIA
ANTI-AMERICANISM
FIDEL CASTRO RUZ
DESCRIPTION
Age: 34, born August 13, 1927, Havana, Cuba
(not supported by birth records.)
Height: 6'1"
Weight: 180 pounds
Hair: Black
Eyes: Brown
Race: Latin
Nationality: Carribean
Occupations: Academic, ballplayer, premier.
Scars and marks: Mole on right cheek,
possible bullet scars on torso.
Remarks: Has been known to wear a beard in the past.
CRIMINAL RECORD
RUZ IS A CONVICTED REVOLUTIONARY AND A KNOWN ANTI-CAPITALIST.
CAUTION
CASTRO RUZ MAY BE ACCOMPANIED BY ARMED BODY-GUARDS AND SHOULD BE CONSIDERED EXTREMELY DANGEROUS. IF APPREHENDED, SELF-DESTRUCT.
A FEDERAL WARRANT FOR HIS EXECUTION WAS ISSUED FEBRUARY 12, 1961, AT WASHINGTON, D.C.
IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING METHODS OF STIFFING THIS PERSON, PLEASE NOTIFY ME OR CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CIA AGENT.
DIRECTOR
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

But if we would continue to preach that the United States somehow represents the last, best hope of the world—without blushing when we look in the shaving glass or expecting other than horse laughs from the denizens of a skeptical globe—then is it asking too much to demand of our power apparatus that it cease its tawdry political killings? How are we any less brutal than the brutes when we insist on performing brutalities of our own? Cold war mythology taught that those bastard communists must be rolled back because they enslaved liberty and murdered its sons: on that premise we continue to tax for arms and unsheath our sabers. What purpose is preventing their atrocities only to adopt them as our own? Are the citizens of this world any better off when killed by the red, white and blue rather than by the merely Red?

All this may seem terribly basic and elemental. If you and I understand it so quickly, however, then why can't we seem to drum it into the heads of our politicians and their hired guns? Well, for one thing, we've never really tried. We have sat on our duffs, turned our heads, held our tongues and our noses. Meanwhile, we have permitted much dirty business, soiling not only our flag but our souls. The sophisticated, I suppose, will find this preachment to be naive; but, then, aren't *they* the juiceless fellows who—refined and deadened beyond a sense of corruption—assigned the mischief and the guns? When our so-called best people offer "hit" contracts to gangsters, it is proper to aggressively remind them that the time is long past when soldiers fought so that kings might become heroes. Maybe our politicians fail to pay much attention to random letters or complaints from their constituents, but if enough people stuff the mailboxes of Washington in protest, then it is possible for events to be turned around.

Especially would I hope that conservatives might join in demanding of their congressmen, senators and presidential hopefuls real evidence of their personal specific actions toward bringing the spook-and-spy elements under control. I know my conservative friends may not wish to go to school with wicked old liberals, or permit their daughters to marry one. But for all our diverse definitions, I believe we all can agree that Freedom's cause becomes disadvantaged when dependent upon murder. ●

Were liberals taken on the filibuster
Are they taking us on food prices?

THE INSIDER

EDITED BY TONY SCHWARTZ

THE WORD

Nude rider of the purple page

The Watergate-inspired image of Maureen (Mo) Dean as the prim, stoic wife bravely standing by her man will undergo considerable revision with the appearance of her autobiography, scheduled for this fall. Sources familiar with the manuscript, which is being ghosted by *Time* correspondent Hays Gorey, and for which Mo is receiving a reported $150,000 advance, say it portrays her as a once-archetypal swinging single. So much a swinger, in fact, that Gorey, a Mormon, is filtering out the raciest aspects of Mo's revelations. One thing

UPI

Mo Dean: a racier side

that will definitely not be in the book is a photo of the then single and dark-haired Maureen, taken on a beach. According to one person who has seen it, the picture shows a topless Maureen astride a motorcycle, with her arms clasped lovingly around the male driver. And, no, he is not John Wesley.

Dog days

This year's Academy Award for Best Song may well go to "I Feel Love," the theme of an obscure sub-Disney movie called *Benji*. An independent production out of Texas, *Benji* hasn't been seen in New York or in a number of other major U.S. movie outlets. No matter. To the Academy's 3,203

PETER C. BORSARI

Charlie Rich: a man and his dog

voting members, publicity campaigns are an accepted part of the award process, and *Benji* was the beneficiary of a great one.

A lavish Hollywood premiere started things off in November. The star dog arrived in a Rolls Royce, ate raw prime ribs and slurped water from a crystal goblet at the post-screening black-tie dinner, and then accepted a gold plaque from animal lover Doris Day. "Maybe the award didn't come from her heart, because I told everyone what to do," said Peter Simone, the gung-ho 22-year-old press agent who masterminded the campaign after his client, country music star Charlie Rich, recorded "I Feel Love." The dog later appeared with Rich in Las Vegas, was a guest with Dinah Shore and Lili Tomlin on national TV and did eight L.A. talk shows. "I predict our *Benji* is going to win," Simone said recently, "and it could only happen in Hollywood."

You get what you 'serve

Look for a revamped Jimmy Connors image. So thoroughly has the tennis star alienated his public that during a recent tournament in New York a slew of public relations specialists were brought to his hotel to discuss the problem. Connors, one of the least popular major figures in sports today, has been the subject of such hostility from spectators in recent weeks that friends say his game has been affected. In addition, a disappointing crowd at a recent Connecticut tournament is being blamed partly on Connors' unpopularity.

During the hotel meeting, according to one of the 10 or so participants, Connors listened courteously for over two hours as the flaks dissected his problem. Among suggestions gleaned by watching films of Connors in action were that he applaud after his opponents' good shots, stop swaggering when he wins

WIDE WORLD

The Selling of Jimmy Connors

points and laud his opponents following matches. Connors did reject at least one suggestion. Although his habit of repeatedly bouncing the ball before serving annoys opponents, Connors insists it is a crucial part of his rhythm.

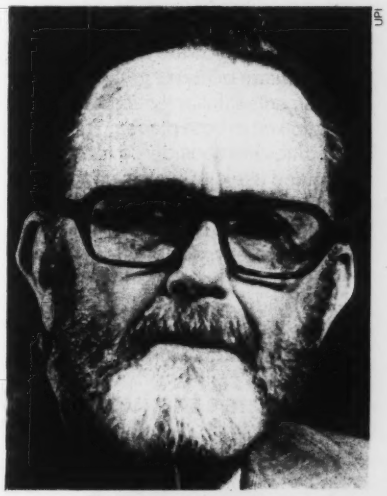
POWER POLITICS

Fast talk

The recent Senate compromise which seemed to make it easier to end filibusters may backfire. Liberals accepted a set majority of 60 senators to end any filibuster. If all 100 senators are on the floor, a 60 majority is easier to obtain than the previous two-thirds vote required. But if only 90 senators vote, the 60 requirement will again represent two-thirds. And if the number of senators present drops below 90, anti-filibuster forces would have to rally even higher percentages. The new rule also gives filibusterers a subtle but strong new weapon. Instead of pressing senators to vote their way, filibusterers can now just ask wavering legislators to take a walk and not to vote at all, in each instance raising the percentage needed to end filibusters.

Losing Hart

Although he is a virtual shoo-in for reelection in 1976, Senator Philip Hart (D-Mich.) has told friends he will not run. The reason is an unusual one: frustration. During his three terms in the Senate, Hart has gained a reputation as one of the body's most honest and introspective members. A champion of consumer issues and antitrust legislation who has supported busing in a violently anti-busing state, Hart was deeply moved by the Vietnam protests of the '60s, in which his wife and children participated, and he became one of the early antiwar voices in the Senate. In 1970 he won a landslide 67 percent of the vote against Lenore Romney. Since then, however, he has come increasingly to believe that the Senate and its legislative process does not work. As he put it to a friend over a recent dinner, "The usual pace of the Senate is to pass legislation about 20 years after it becomes necessary."

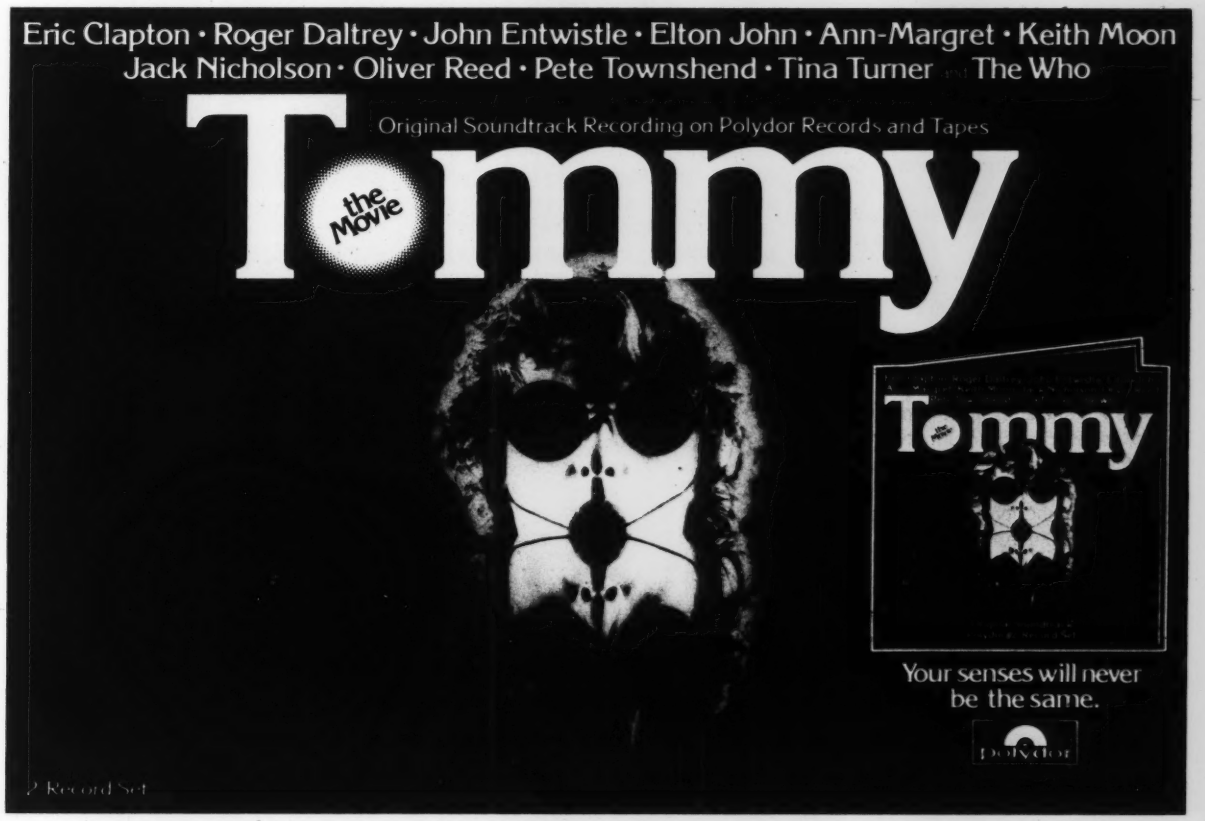

UPI

Philip Hart packs it up

Mutual support

If an emergency farm price support bill now in the House goes through, increased costs for food could be over $4 billion annually. According to the Agriculture Department, a pound of beef would go up 4½ cents, a gallon of milk 3 cents, a pound of butter 20 cents and a pound of pork 20½ cents.

The bill has spawned curious alliances. Opposed are labor unions, liberal Republicans, consumer groups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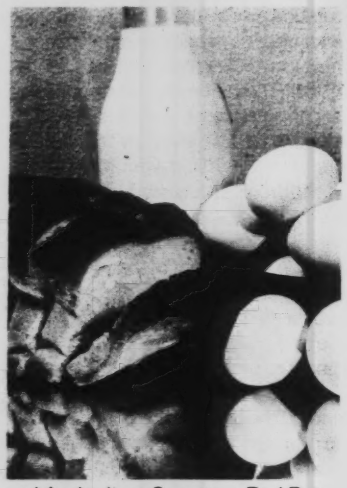

NORMAN CAHN

and Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz, not generally known as a consumer advocate. Proponents include the House's liberal Democratic leadership and conservatives of both parties. Price supports are designed to protect the farmer from falling prices while maintaining high productivity, and under the bill support would be upped from the present 80 percent to 85 percent.

Leading the fight for the bill is liberal congressman Phillip Burton of California. In essence, a deal has been struck under which the Democrats would vote for price supports in exchange for conservative and rural votes on urban interest bills, such as an increased food stamp program.

Which brings to mind a curious notion: urban liberals let food prices increase in exchange for votes on government programs that will enable their constituents to afford the higher costs.

In whose Defense?

If you feel secure in the knowledge that the government keeps close watch over the defense industry, this should make you shiver. Department of Defense employees routinely take conflict of interest positions with private contractors over whom they once had authority. That's the finding of an elaborate report released recently by the Council on Economic Priorities, a public-interest group concerned with corporate practices.

The 85-page study shows that at least 27 percent of employees studied over a recent four-year period had gone to work—often in direct criminal violation of conflict of interest laws—for private defense-related companies.

A dubious honor

The bidding for the right to host the 1976 presidential conventions has begun among cities, even at this early date and despite the problems of 1968 and 1972. According to Democratic National Committee sources, the party is now reviewing the bids of some eleven cities; Los Angeles and Atlanta are considered the front runners. The others include Chicago and Miami, both of which have acrid memories for Democrats; and New York City and Washington, which are at a disadvantage because competing 1976 bicentennial activities will be going full tilt in both places. Three other cities are considered long shots: Cleveland (the city itself is unpopular); New Orleans (the astrodome there isn't completed); and Norfolk, Virginia (too small). The networks traditionally have a big say in the choice, and if they get their way, Los Angeles will probably get the nod since much network equipment is already there.

Here comes the judge

Back in December, a highway patrolman stopped a car outside Santa Barbara, California, for going 61 in a 55 mph zone. The passenger in the chauffeur-driven vehicle turned out to be then-Governor Ronald Reagan, and no citation was given. After the story leaked out, an enraged San Diego Municipal Court Judge named Robert Cooney began refusing to fine anyone ticketed for speeding between 55 and 61 mph. The city attorney is taking the issue to Superior Court, but Cooney refuses to budge until the highway patrol offers an acceptable explanation for not citing Reagan's car. Post-Watergate politics prevail.

WIDE WORLD

Reagan:
unequal under the eyes of the law

Good Tydings?

One of the pre-Watergate victims of Nixon politics is planning a comeback. In 1970 then-Maryland Senator Joseph Tydings was locked in a close race with Republican J. Glenn Beall when *Life* magazine published a damaging article accusing Tydings of influence-peddling in a case involving banking regulations. The charges ultimately did not hold up, but Beall squeaked through to a narrow victory, much to the delight of the Nixon administration. Subsequently, it was revealed that Charles Colson had been the source for *Life* reporter Bill Lambert's original stories.

Tydings is now planning another run at Beall in 1976. He is only

WIDE WORLD

The return of Joe Tydings

47, has kept in touch with his old organization, and is thus believed to be a viable candidate. Beall is considered vulnerable and as a result Tydings may have company in a crowded Democratic primary including Governor Marvin Mandel, highly regarded liberal congressman Paul Sarbanes and the popular Democratic senate candidate last year, Barbara Mukulsky.

Dismembering the unions

Very quietly, the Ford administration is beginning to lay the groundwork for using antitrust laws against the major labor unions. According to sources at both the White House and the Justice Department, a study is now being undertaken to determine the extent of the union's power within the economy and what reforms are needed to bring

labor under antitrust regulations. The study is part of a much larger overall look at government regulation of industry and the various antitrust exemptions. At the heart of the study will be the practice of industry-wide bargaining, sanctioned by the National Labor Relations Board. The Supreme Court has already expressed some reservations about the practice, notably in a ruling that industry-wide wage scales were driving small coal companies out of business.

Lifting the Securities blanket?

A Securities and Exchange Commission ruling next month may force corporations to own up to their seamier sides. An intensive lobby is being mounted on behalf of a rule that would force public corporations to reveal complaints and fines, in addition to environmental, civil rights and equal employment suits brought against them.

The SEC has long been trying to avoid dealing with the sticky issue of corporate public responsibility. Now, however, the U.S. District Court in Washington has ordered them to make a final ruling, in response to a suit brought by the Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental advocacy group. NRDC succeeded in forcing the commission's hand even though other social action groups, including the National Organization for Women and the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, have failed in previous attempts.

EDUCATION

When Bok comes knocking at your door

Harvard President Derek Bok has told a close friend that he hopes to use the recession as an excuse to get rid of faculty members—and perhaps even whole departments—who cause him problems. During the last year, as Harvard's huge endowment dropped from $1.6 to $1.4 billion, Bok has begun talking in public about "belt tightening."

Among possible victims of a reduced budget are the Center for Population Studies and the young radical professors in the Economics and Sociology departments. The most likely target, however, is the Afro-American Studies Department,

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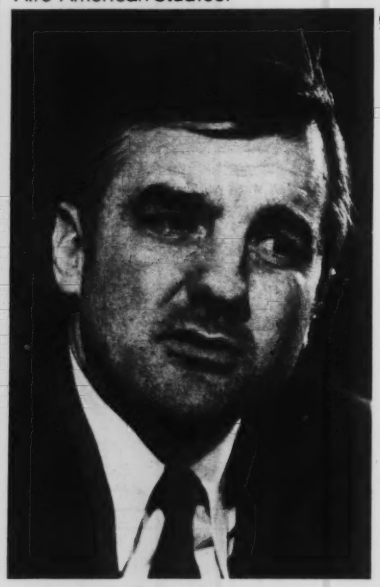
which was established as a concession to the '69 strikers and offers many of the university's most radical courses. The department is particularly vulnerable because it has only one tenured professor.

Department Chairman Ewart Guinier has warned against turning on innovative departments in times of fiscal crisis but said recently that he had no evidence unusually severe cutbacks were in the offing for Afro-American Studies.



UPI

Harvard's Bok: recession plans

SEVENTIES

Trash is a gas

The United States Army has discovered a "renewable resource" that could drastically reduce dependence on petroleum products. In Natick, Massachusetts, Army chemical engineers have devised a way of turning newspapers into glucose sugar, and the glucose into ethanol, which is in turn a major component of gasoline.

The basic ingredient in the Army's process is cellulose, a substance that makes up the cell wall of plants. Cellulose is found everywhere—in trees, municipal trash and newspapers.

At the beginning of the Army's process is a greenish-yellow microorganism, *Trichoderma viride*, which produces an enzyme cellulase. When Natick scientists treat newspapers with that enzyme, the cellulase turns the newspapers into glucose. By yeast fermentation ethanol, or ethyl alcohol, is derived.

If the Natick scientists can find a way to make the glucose-ethanol process economic (it can be produced now only in small quantities), the results would be staggering. The United States uses over 300 million gallons of ethanol a year to make polyethylene, polypropylene and toiletries. Currently, all that ethanol is made from petroleum. Natick scientists are even predicting that their ethanol can be used as a major ingredient in gasoline.

Is it Warrented?

The Warren Commission Report on the JFK assassination has become a collector's item. Six thousand copies of the massive 26-volume document were published by the Government Printing Office a decade ago, and at $76, there weren't many takers. Now, however, Watergate and CIA revelations have revved up interest in assassination conspiracy theories once dismissed as the fancy of paranoids. The complete Warren Report, a treasure of source material, is selling for between $400 and $600—double its price a month ago.

High and dry

Although Bruce Klahr operated on the fringe of the law for six years, he lived in the midst of counterculture-supported opulence. His Inner Sanctum Imports, one of the largest marijuana paraphernalia wholesalers in the country, was once grossing $2 million annually. The Denver-based firm sold items like pipes, screens and rolling papers to retail head shops around the country.

The month of August, when the Denver *Post* ran a front-page story on the company, Inner Sanctum took in $90,000. But by February, sales had dropped to almost zero and Klahr decided to close up shop, a victim, he said, of the recession and of his own overextension. What may be the real reason is more interesting. The '60s middle-class fascination with drugs has passed and kids are simply smoking less dope.

NEIL BENSON

In the days when dope meant business

Whatever's feesable

Lecture fees, despite the flap raised about ethics in recent weeks, are finally a function of demand.

Toronto's University of Guelph recently paid John Dean $3,250 for a lecture. Jeb Magruder, a slightly less notorious felon, is slated to speak in Toronto's Convocation Hall next month for $2,500. Meanwhile, the nearby University of Western Ontario recently had to cancel another planned lecture—for lack of interest. The speaker would have been either Carl Bernstein or Bob Woodward.

WIDE WORLD

Magruder: the demand is there

HEALTH

Super-dosing on Vitamin A

When it comes to nutrition, it not infrequently happens that what's good for you in small doses can be bad for you—even lethal, sometimes—if consumed in large enough quantities.

New evidence that super doses of Vitamin A, for instance, can make you seriously ill comes from Dr. R.M. Russell and colleagues at the University of Chicago's Pritzker School of Medicine. They reported recently in *The New England Journal of Medicine* on two patients, a man and a woman, who were hospitalized with mysterious symptoms resembling cirrhosis of the liver, as well

as a host of lesser symptoms: loss of appetite, fatigue, inflammation of the gums, loss of hair, brittle nails and dry, cracked skin. Eventually both patients admitted that they had been taking from 100,000 to 1,250,000 units of Vitamin A a day (20 to 250 times the recommended daily amount) over periods of years. Such excesses of Vitamin A do *not* go right through you, but accumulate in the liver. These patients had some 10 times the normal amount of Vitamin A stored in their livers, so much that it may take years for it all to clear out, even though they have stopped taking it.

Dr. Russell and friends think that Vitamin A poisoning may be far more common than is generally realized, and that physicians may miss the diagnosis because the symptoms are so variable.

Not hiring the (medically) handicapped

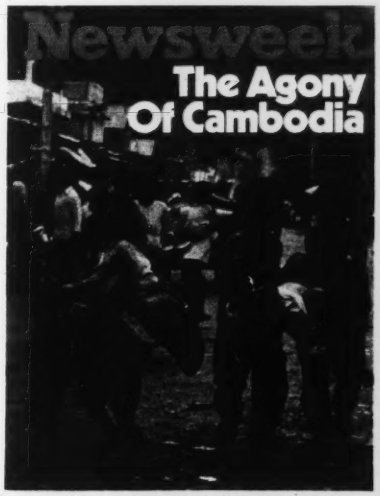
It's not fair. If you get sick, not only do you have all those bills to pay, but employers also discriminate against you. Drs. Murray Weinstock and Jacob Haft of New York City's Mount Sinai School of Medicine recently polled industrial physicians representing a broad cross-section of employers—manufacturers, a life insurance company, a university hospital and communications and transportation corporations. More than 30 percent of the physicians replied that their firms would not hire a 38-year-old applicant for a managerial position who had had a previous heart attack, even though he no longer had any symptoms; 13 percent would not hire a diabetic who needed insulin; and 60 percent would not hire a person taking medication for psychiatric illness. "Even patients with mild illnesses, which may not increase their morbidity or mortality, are being denied work," Drs. Weinstock and Haft write in the *Archives of Environmental Health*. "The criteria used for determining employability appear, in some cases, to have little relation to modern medical judgment."

— Marlon Steinmann

MEDIA

The story of Cambodia's agony

In the midst of stepped-up violence in Cambodia last month, *Newsweek* began to look for a cover photograph that would capture the beleaguered country's tragic plight. Such a search typically involves perusing hundreds of photographs from numerous sources. The final choice for the cover of the March 10th issue was a particularly dramatic scene in burning Phnom Penh, taken by Gamma photographer Sou Vichith. Not surprisingly, the picture produced in those who saw it an almost reflexive sympathy for a country that had



apparently suffered sudden and bloody reverses.

Well, not quite, it seems. The irony is that the photograph, although not so identified, was taken a year ago.

POST SCRIPTS

Sam Lovejoy (October 18, 1974)

On February 22, 1974, a 500-foot meteorological tower in Montague, Massachusetts, erected by the local utility company in preparation for a large nuclear plant, was toppled. Leaving behind 400 feet of twisted wreckage, Sam Lovejoy turned himself in to police, explaining the act of sabotage as an attempt to galvanize opposition to the plant in the somewhat complacent rural community.

A year to the day after Lovejoy's symbolic protest, Northeast Utilities announced a four-year delay in the construction of the plant, citing the severe financial crisis and the first local decline in electricity consumption in 25 years. The Montague plant called for an outlay of well over $1½ billion, and the company simply could not afford it.

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The ten brightest congressmen

By Larry L. King

It has been customary to depict our national House of Representatives as the home of little men with tiny hammers and huge limitations. Opinion polls generally rate it far below reigning presidents in matters of public confidence, public expectations, public approval. Comedians in need of a yuk need only invoke the Congress or congressmen. It worked for Mark Twain ("There is no distinctly American criminal class except Congress") and Will Rogers, who hoped that should his likeness be placed in the capital's statuary hall it might face the House of Representatives so he could keep an eye on those birds.

House members agonize when referred to as being creatures of "the lower body." Though they long have insisted the two legislative chambers are constitutionally equal, many have weakened this preachment by running for the United States Senate at each opportunity. As for senators' attitudes—well, when did you last hear of one resigning to seek the House seat from the good ole 14th District? There are 100 senators, a goodly percentage of whom eventually eat at the White House or at Barbara Howar's. There are 435 representatives, of whom precious few do. Senators simply have more prestige, rule more territory and larger staffs, reap bigger headlines or network opportunities, furnish more presidents and grand schemes.

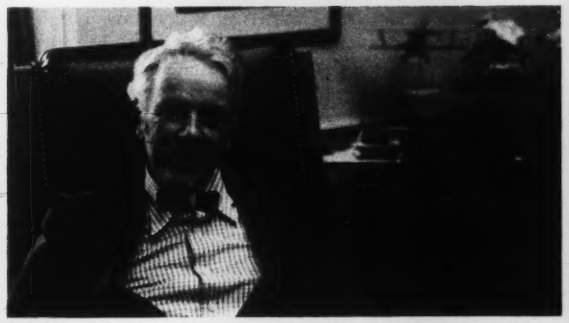
The typical House member has been caricatured as a nepotism-prone buffoon, a junketing spendthrift of counterpart funds, a log-rolling pork-barreling simple-minded errand boy for the folks back in Cedar Rapids or Pocatello—at best, a walking advertisement for mediocrity. But the House is not all bad; it may actually be improving. Even in its worst days there were occasional shining hours, random heroes, good men buried in the ruins.

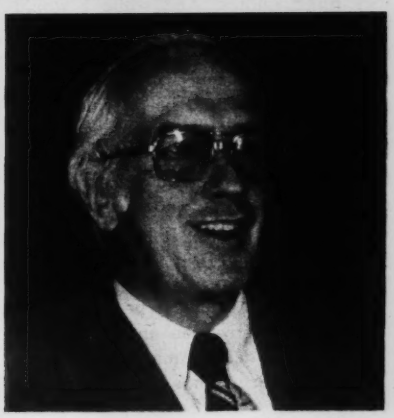
Some good news: a scouting report on the smartest of the representatives, based on the observations of their colleagues

So, while many Americans didn't take serious note of the House until its Judiciary Committee lent dignity to impeachment proceedings last year—or until Jerry Ford was beckoned from it to occupy the tallest national chair—it always has had a goodly complement of truly bright, ultra-competent, sometimes witty, sometimes daring men and women who put the lie to the old caricatures. Perhaps they never had the breaks or opportunities of their former colleagues—among them Jack Kennedy, Gene McCarthy, Everett Dirksen, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon—who went on to bigger mischief. Still, they have by intelligence, skill, caring and applied ambition had their influences on the Congress, on presidents and on public policies even if you seldom hear their names.

After *New Times* last year named the ten dumbest congressmen, I approached the editors with a suggestion that I ferret out the best and the brightest on Capitol Hill. This, I knew, would not be easy; obvious problems immediately presented themselves. Eager freshmen of the 94th Congress, for all their deposing of aging and ineffectual committee chairmen or for their junking of useless traditions, had to be ruled out simply because they haven't been on the Washington scene long enough to have established individual track records. There would be

The ten, from left to right and top to bottom: John Brademas, Indiana; Bob Eckhardt, Texas; Brock Adams, Washington; Otis Pike, New York; John Moss, California; Phillip Burton, California; John Anderson, Illinois; Morris Udall, Arizona; Richard Bolling, Missouri; Frank Thompson Jr., New Jersey (Democrats all, except for Republican Anderson).





fewer Republicans named than Democrats—not only because of institutional mathematics, the House being Democratic exactly two to one—but because, frankly, the Grand Old Party tends to elect stodgier folk: *good* people, you understand, just a mite... well, dull and grey. Senators were arbitrarily excluded so as to focus on the better personalities of a long-neglected House just coming into a new prominence, and because of those complexities in trying seriously to compare apples to oranges: these we shall anoint another day. Even having pared the list, however, how did one make responsible and intelligent choices?

You cannot, you see, go in and hold stopwatches on individual House members and say, "OK, you can recite, sing, whistle, stomp or dance—but you've got just ten minutes to prove you're smart." If you've worked on Capitol Hill for a decade, and for another decade have observed and interviewed there, you know that a few minutes with a politician grinning and preening his or her best can be as misleading as advertisements for Mexican gold mines: some fellow as shallow as his dog's supper dish may beguile you, because he's got his act down pat, while a fellow smart enough to solve Chinese arithmetic while juggling eight balls on ice skates may come off reclusive, preoccupied or plain dull. These people are consummate actors. Some attempt to parade their egos under the banner of intelligence, while others find it advantageous to slyly conceal their lights under bushels.

I decided to approach the brightest congressmen, Hill aides and Hill journalists I knew: these would furnish the original nominees. Nominees making the final cut might be interviewed about other nominees—though not about themselves. Since congressmen are reluctant to be quoted about their brothers (especially if making candid appraisals), I would have to make do with unsatisfactory blind quotes. And while I would bring to the work my own perceptions—and, yes, prejudices—in considering each nominee's assets and liabilities, the results hopefully would be an amalgamation of what my various sources said: a loose consensus of how influential politicians and experienced observers of Capitol Hill viewed the nominees. These would be the ground rules, without regard to racial or sexual or partisan quotas.

"You got a hell of a problem," said a veteran congressman and old friend. "How do you define 'smart'? You've got the pure intellects, those people who can quote passages of literature while understanding the philosophies in it. Sometimes they're difficult to tell from those who quote it like a parrot, without understanding its subtleties or suspecting its mysteries or knowing much of the human condition. You've got the institutionally wise, people who know how to swim through the shoals and shallows to get things done or to promote themselves. *That* category contains both the pragmatists and the street-smart guys. You've got a few great orators who can sway people, as opposed to some who don't talk pretty but whose ability to think well on their feet can convincingly marshal the facts or focus the basics. You've got specialists who know all about veterans' benefits or public roads, but otherwise may not know the time of day. You've got a world of 'quick studies'—lawyers, usually, who can learn anything long enough to make it serve them and then dismiss it from their minds. You've got a handfull who're just so goddamn *mean* most people are afraid to cross 'em—and in an institution where power is the watchword, you've got to think that maybe a bully is about half-smart. For that matter, how dumb is the good ole boy who grins and charms his way? See, the towering intellects may be less effective—may *count* for less, may deliver less—than the merely bright or clever. I don't believe you can make fair distinctions by confining it to I.Q. scores or those who listen to opera."

The House has been called a den of mediocrity, but it is not all bad. And it may be improving

I cogitated on my friend's advice only to discover new complexities. Bella Abzug, the New York Democrat, is of obvious high intelligence; even her enemies so rate her. They also say—as do some friendly observers—that she is ineffective because she is "irritating... abrasive... ungracious to people... tries to bludgeon you to her viewpoint." They say she told old Fishbait Miller, the former House doorkeeper, to go fuck himself when he instructed that wearing her large, floppy hats on the floor violated House rules; and that she once ordered Speaker Carl Albert—attempting to verbally dance around one of her demands—to cut the crap and get to the point. Still, Ms. Abzug is not without her accomplishments. She studies the rules, and in a notable case stopped a road bill conservationists opposed by making a point-of-order that House rules prohibited authorization of *specific* highway projects. Her speeches against the Vietnam war, for women's rights and for welfare families have won converts. "You can't judge Bella by the little legislation bearing her name," said a colleague. "She's goaded some so-called liberals into action, rather than them standing around with their thumbs up their asses. She believes government action can make a difference in people's lives and she's absolutely tireless in that cause." So the lady is a ground-breaker, a trailblazer—one unafraid to push on, one who understands that today's loss may be necessary to attain tomorrow's victory.

"The old bastard's smart," colleagues say of Wayne Hays, 63, of Ohio's 18th District. Hays once was described by Phil Burton of California, at a Democratic Study Group meeting, as "the meanest man in Congress"; probably the notion was not original with Burton, who himself can be as mean as a pit-dog. On the floor Democrat Hays once said of Michigan's Don Riegle—who'd had the temerity to dispute the hawkish Ohioan's word on the Vietnam war—"There is a picture [in this newspaper] of Mr. Riegle and also one of Gloria Steinem, and I'm glad they have them labeled because otherwise I could not tell one from the other by judging from their hair." Lauding the 1971 Mayday mass arrests of antiwar demonstrators in Washington, Hays implied he'd carried a weapon in his car and would have used it had any such rabble attempted to impede his progress. When Adam Clayton Powell of Harlem was in jeopardy for having flaunted his playboy style in defiance of congressional niceties, Hays was the most merciless member demanding his expulsion. He snarls at elevator operators, waitresses, pages or other Hill functionaries who fail to obsequiously bow to his power as chairman of the House Administration Committee—the unit controlling jobs, property and comforts on the Hill. He has threatened colleagues and newsmen with fisticuffs. This did not prevent Hays, however, from lobbying with former enemies on the eve of the challenge to his chairmanship by 94th freshmen—including a reporter whom he'd once offered to bop in the nose, and who presumably was friendly with votes Hays considered in doubt. (P.S.: He survived the challenge.) "Wayne carries a lot of weight on the floor," says a colleague, "because people play up to him to keep him from bullying them." But that isn't the whole story. Hays obviously does his homework and can cheerfully cut the ill-prepared in floor debate; he's a near-

Runners-up Wayne Hays and Bella Abzug: a little too belligerent for their own good.

wizard at parliamentary procedure.

Few consider Hays among the true intellects; yet he was as consistently mentioned as anyone when politicians began to appraise their own. "A fair number of so-called smarter men have been made to look foolish by Wayne's quick mastery of specific legislation," one said, "and his confidence that he's as good as anybody on his own turf." Another remarked that when Hays appears excessive in his floor remarks, "He's usually saying aloud the darkest thoughts locked up in more timid heads. He has an uncanny way of sensing the House mood and knowing how far he can go, even when his remarks may appear reckless or foolish." Strangely, though he has all the earmarks of the mean conservative—and projects that image gleefully—he gets along among fellow Democrats by voting surprisingly liberal over the long haul. "Another thing," says an iconoclastic member, "is that Wayne will make you any deal or trade to get what he wants—and he'll honor his commitment."

A third type is Gillis Long, 51, a Democrat from Louisiana's 8th District. Born in Winnfield Parish—home of Huey Long and others of the famous political family—he has a superb sense of dealing with other congressmen. "Gillis always listens. He appears sincerely concerned about whatever you're talking about." His sense of humor is the best of a type among Southern pols: self-deprecating, easy, unpretentious. Long, who spent years on Capitol Hill as a staffer, is said to be sensitive to all the political vibes. "He has a disarming way of not fueling jealousies," says a friend. "He's not too tall, not too good-looking and he's smart enough not to let people know he's smarter than they are." Another says, "He's pragmatic. Gillis knows how to appease special interests when they must be appeased. He fathoms all the tides, pressures, values and rewards that may attend any given legislation." But Long is willing to take a chance—to work for or vote with national Democrats on key issues. It doesn't take much courage to so vote in many districts, but in Long's pea-picking redneck precincts it involves risks. "Ole Gillis," another Southern pol grins, "he just good-ole-boy's his district to death the same as he does his colleagues. When it comes to people, that boy can pee on their feet and convince 'em it's raining."

Long's shrewd reading of colleagues has enabled him to remain influential with Tory Democrats from the South even while building credit with national Democrats. The younger, new breed of Dixie liberals feel comfortable with him and seek his advice during their

apprenticeships. "Gillis has a good lawyer's mind," one said. "He's far more sophisticated than his manner shows. I think when he worked on the Hill as a staff lawyer he studied this place—and its people—with the intent of coming back as a congressman. A fellow named Lyndon Johnson did the same."

None of the foregoing—for all their varied styles or virtues—placed in our Top Ten. It's difficult to say exactly why. Perhaps Ms. Abzug simply isn't enough of the mover-and-shaker in day-to-day operations. It could be that Mr. Hays—who is—simply exudes less than a first-class odor. Although Mr. Long should not be ignored for his cloakroom influences or courage, *New Times* simply found others thought to be better combinations. These three are, however, deserving of honorable mention, as are the following, who may step forward, in no particular ranking order, for their brief bows before making way for the big winners.

Barbara Jordan, 39, 18th District of Texas (Houston). You may recall her magnificent speech during impeachment proceedings, which probably laid the better constitutional groundwork. She was the big, black woman with the deep voice, careful enunciation, no-nonsense eyes. Has large ego; can be sardonic; some think her pushy, though maybe in part because of her sex and race. Moves easily to the power, as befits one ambitious enough for two. She early jumped on the presidential bandwagon of Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas despite his tepid liberal credentials: she knows, whatever happens, that Bentsen will remain powerful, rich and well-connected in her home sphere. Smart (she's a lawyer and graduated magna cum laude in political science and history), but likely to oversell her total capacity by main strength and articulation. Pragmatic enough to work with the Devil. Outwardly tough and protective, she may be secretly timid at the core. "Barbara gives nobody the slightest advantage," says a colleague, "including that of flattery. Her game is keeping people off balance and reaping the benefits. And she's a whiz at it."

John J. Rhodes, 58, Republican, 1st District of Arizona (Mesa). Replaced Jerry Ford as House minority leader. Though far from a sheer intellect, he's bright; known for integrity and for hard work without being a drone. "Hard-assed," members say as a compliment. The Hill knew Dick Nixon was through when Rhodes—an old pal and supporter—suggested his resignation. Though giving the impression of being something of a martinet—he stands West Point straight and until recently wore a 1950's butch haircut—Rhodes actually flies by the seat of his pants more than many rudderless Republicans would like; may not exercise full potential for leadership. "His office is in his hat," some complain. Rhodes has moved from ultra-conservative to conservative, though one has to look carefully to discern it. Gets things done by being fair, affable, accountable—and in a powerful office.

Henry Reuss, 62, Democrat of Wisconsin's 5th District (Milwaukee). New chairman of Banking and Currency, replacing 81-year-old Wright Patman of Texas. Given the economic situation, he'll have opportunities to shine. Think of Reuss as a president of Princeton who has decided to lead the people in a Holy Cause. Remember Woodrow Wilson? Studious, something of a Midwestern patrician, he burns the midnight oil and concentrates on the specifics of economic programs rather than on being a visionary. May tell you much more than you wish to know of their picayune details. Professorial, lacking the charisma to bring people along behind him. Compassionate in terms of "the people," he's personally a bit cool and remote one-on-one. Though respecting his intelligence and abilities, colleagues have a behind-the-back nickname for Reuss: "The Prince."

Paul Sarbanes, 42, Democrat, of Maryland's 3rd District (Baltimore). His curriculum vitae is impressive: magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa at Princeton; L.L.B., cum laude, Harvard Law School; a Rhodes Scholar who took first-class B.A. honors in school of philosophy, politics and economics. Serious, able, hard-working, practical. An Orthodox Greek, he was instrumental in legislation cutting off military aid to Turkey. There is a general feeling, however, as Sarbanes begins his third term, that he isn't quite living up to his potential. He was competent, rather than distinguished, in impeachment hearings. Humorless, he is a private man who doesn't mix well. This trait, combined with his advertised intelligence, causes House back-slappers and hoo-hawers some discomfort. Sarbanes, in turn, doesn't appear to quickly grasp power's uses. "Paul has no ability to engage in personal deception," a friend says. Perhaps not Machiavellian enough to become a true force.

Barbara Jordan:
a whiz at keeping people off balance.

Abe Mikva, 49, Democrat, 10th District of Illinois (Evanston). Though technically a "freshman," Mikva served two terms before losing his seat in the 1972 Nixon landslide to a one-term Republican. Known as one of the better lawyers, he has the ability to engage in political banter with members of all stripes and seemed marked for future leadership until defeat interrupted his career. "Abe understands the processes in broad strokes," a colleague says. "He's a humanist, handsome and congenial." Broadly committed to liberal ideology, Mivka examines issues for constitutional niceties and then determines policies. Not afraid to stand alone. Good bet to be heard from.

Jim O'Hara, 49, Democrat, 12th District of Michigan (Utica). Excellent mind, large ambitions. Ran unsuccessfully for House majority leadership and was crushed and embarrassed when he finished last in the field of five. Magnificent understanding of House rules and how to apply them. Known for labor ties and a liberal record, O'Hara lost stroke among his own when (in obvious response to constituent reactions) he became almost radically anti-busing. Flexible and pragmatic to the point of perhaps too quickly surrendering a principle to achieve a success. His facile mind seizes on clever and quick solutions. Hides burning ambitions behind a mild exterior of horn-rimmed glasses and brown suits that make him look like an assistant high school principal who teaches math. If he wants something, however, he can be a barracuda. In more conservative congresses O'Hara has been thought too much the knee-jerk liberal.

Joe D. Waggoner Jr., 56, Democrat, 4th District of Louisiana (Plain Dealing). Has a likable country boy's instinct for getting along. A military hawk and a conservative, he nonetheless has built an influen-

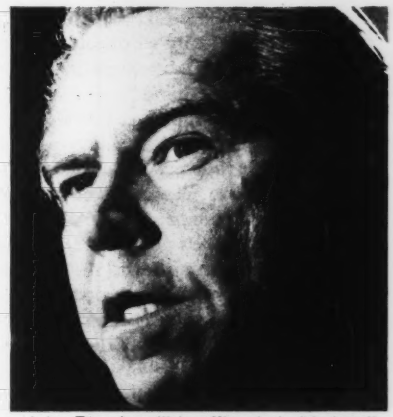
tial network of friends cutting across party lines and even ideological ones. Excellent tactician. Something of a behind-the-scenes power and manipulator. Like fellow Louisianian Gillie Long, he knows when to accommodate and has a sharp knowledge not only of the organizational structure but of the strengths and foibles of the people in it. If you want something done, likely Joe will know somebody—or some way. As member of the Ways and Means Committee, he's well situated. May have lost some stroke since his best pal, Wilbur Mills, fell from grace: it was Waggoner who brought the world bulletins on Wilbur's condition from the hospital and who administered the 94th Congress oath of office to him there.

Despite shrinkage of old-line Dixiecrats in the House, Waggoner retains the capability to meld the Tory Dems with Republicans in an ages-old coalition to fight "liberal schemes." This is a function he inherited from old "Judge" Howard Smith of Virginia, though where Smith was flinty and sour, Waggoner has operated from the strength of his own affable personality. "Joe's real advantage," a colleague says, "is his ability to learn more about pending legislation than just about anyone—and his talent for using the rules to seize every opportunity for his point of view."

Other House members received scattered nominations—among them William Steiger (R-Wis.), Don Riegle (D-Mich.), Tom Foley (D-Wash.), Elizabeth Holtzman (D-N.Y.), Ron Dellums (D-Calif.), Barber Conable Jr. (R-N.Y.), David Obey (D-Wis.), Jim Broyhill (R-N.C.), Sam Gibbons (D-Fla.), Charles Wiggins (R-Calif.), Patsy Mink (D-Hawaii), Don Fraser (D-Minn.), Pete McCloskey Jr. (R-Calif.), John McCollister (R-Neb.), Lud Ashley (D-Ohio), Michael Harrington (D-Mass.), Dante Fascell (D-Fla.) and Richardson Preyer (D-N.C.)—but this thing can't go on all night. It is time, then, to name The Winners: strangely, not a top House leader of either party made it; indeed, neither they nor numerous committee chairmen were cited by nominating sources except in passing or for purposes of comparison. Without further martial music, then—and strictly in alphabetical order—let us anoint *New Times'* Top Ten Members of the House:

Brock Adams

Forty-eight, Democrat, 7th District of Washington (Seattle). "He is an excellent politician among politicians," they tell you—among the top compliments in the House. Has the reputation of understanding the big picture in a body where narrow specialists dominate. "Brock thinks in terms that seem so simple you're ashamed of not having thought of it yourself," a colleague says. "He just has a mental shortcut past the complexities that most of us don't have; he gets right down to the true basics, to the meat and potatoes, better than anyone here." Willing to tackle hard, technical jobs—he knows more about the Penn Central railroad collapse than do its former officials—Adams is credited with having a broader-based economic knowledge than does the new chairman of Banking and Currency, Henry Reuss. Great tactician and parliamentary expert. Says another Top Ten member, "Brock's got all the best human attributes of the far-Westerners. He loves people, he's decorous and polite, he's friendly. Maybe it comes from growing up lonely out there on the edge of the continent." A pause: "And he wastes no time on trivia. He's damned efficient."



John Rhodes: "his office is in his hat."

John B. Anderson

Fifty-three, Republican, 16th District of Illinois (Rockford). "A great mouthpiece with a good mind. He may be *the* strong speaker on the floor. Anderson knows what sways members. He just *never* loses the attention of the House, and he can hold it rapt." The quote comes from a member who doesn't particularly like Anderson. Another simply says, "A must on anybody's list of the best people around here." Critics find Anderson a bit ponderous, devoid of humor, so proud of his oratory he may sometimes play to the crowd just to hear the applause. "John lacks philosophic consistency," another says, "but he's more moderate than most Republicans—sometimes he leans toward the liberal—and he's got tremendous drive. Somebody has called it a 'spiritual spark.' He's personally trustworthy to a fault." The consensus is that while John Anderson isn't overly well-liked—"Too much the prima donna," "Comes on as excessively self-assured and creates jealousies"—he *is* highly respected and will not drive votes away from his causes as do mere orators with limited mental equipment. As a member of the Rules Committee, through which all legislation must flow en route to the floor, Anderson is learned on a wide range of subjects. Religious and active in the First Evangelical Free Church, Anderson will pontificate on morality at the slightest encouragement. Not much fun, but a good man to have on your side.

John Brademas

Forty-seven, Democrat, 3rd District of Indiana (South Bend). Brademas puzzles his colleagues. "A brilliant man," one says. "Maybe the smartest we've got. But I've always wondered what John lacks. He's not much of a leader. Though he has a desire to excel, he just doesn't seem to have a great deal of personal ambition." It could be we've just heard a description of a good man in perfect harmony with himself. Here's an egghead's egghead: Harvard (Veterans National Scholar, Phi Beta Kappa), a Rhodes Scholar, a former professor of political science, once executive assistant to the late Adlai Stevenson. Tough as a Maine Republican at a town meeting, however, when he finds federal agencies throwing money away. Legislative judgment considered very sound: knows what will work and what will pass—and the difference between the two. Principle author of the Higher Education Act. Though an assistant party whip in the House, Brademas is not fascinated by the apparatus of power. Prefers to increase understanding by intellectual processes: lecturing, writing, examining matters at first hand, talking one-on-one to colleagues. Has opinions on almost all major subjects and introduces wide range of legislation. Witty and affable, he doesn't give a flip about being "one of the boys" in a clubroom sense. Well-liked, considering that his reputation for brilliance makes many members uncomfortable in his presence. They probably sense he won't chop off their heads to further boundless ambitions.

Richard Bolling

Fifty-eight, Democrat, 5th District of Missouri (Kansas City). Another human puzzle—though lack of ambition certainly is not his problem. Liberal to the core, and a protégé of the late Speaker Sam Rayburn, he was earmarked for the top by the early 1950s and his keen intelligence has never been questioned. But Bolling incurred the wrath of Old Bulls by

writing books, a decade or more ahead of their time, demanding House reform and documenting its inefficiencies and inequities.

Bolling's attempt to run for House majority leader, in 1961, quickly aborted when he discovered that Oklahoma's Carl Albert (a nonoffensive institutional gameplayer) had the votes. "There's been a residue of bitterness in Dick ever since," a colleague says. "He doesn't try, really, to work with other members. There's no doubt he's simply brilliant, makes powerful arguments and understands the difference between the important and the inconsequential. His legislative judgment's generally excellent, though he seems to reach his decisions by some highly intellectual, convoluted, mysterious and secret way. I don't know—he's got this labyrinthian logic: he worries and complicates everything so that it's hard to get back to square one. There's a Delphian way about the fellow—you just never know what to think about him."

The conventional wisdom is that Bolling looks down his nose at most colleagues and may consider himself a first cousin to God. "Still," says another Top Ten member, "I check my instincts against Bolling's and so do many of the other so-called bright boys. In that way he's more influential than the record shows." A member of Rules, Bolling has both thumbs in many pies; he has enjoyed a new rise in influence during the four years Carl Albert has been speaker by dint of having the speaker's ear.

Phil Burton

Forty-eight, Democrat, 5th District of California (San Francisco). If Phil Burton saw two kids, a dog, a cat and a parakeet straggling down the street he'd probably rush out and organize them into a parade. "He's simply the consummate organizer," a colleague says. "He likes to put together various interests to gain a majority and then test it." Says another: "For all his abrasiveness, Phil's part of the gum and gauze holding this place together. He bridges the gaps between left-liberals and labor-liberals; his influence extends among the women and the blacks."

A political science major (Southern Cal) and a lawyer, Burton has held offices of one kind or another since campus days. Power fascinates him, and he loves tinkering with its machinery. He's a strange mix: a man with a good sense of timing but little articulation, a man who grasps the main point but who may stray from it for the pleasure of a fight. "There's a kind of crassness that goes beyond the bounds and hurts Phil," one man says. "He's blunt and crude, though not in a locker room sense. Like Lyndon Johnson, he uses profanity to punctuate—to put over a point. And he's got the same kind of quick, tough mind."

Burton's saving grace is that he truly enjoys the political game among politicians (who appreciate this), and he'll put himself out to help causes or friends. "He has this burning zeal to win," a colleague says, "but he's not selfish. There's a spark of generosity in him." Away from the battle, Burton tends to brood and examine himself as well as others. A committed liberal, he was one of the founders of the Democratic Study Group; his influence has increased by leaps with the arrival of 70-odd generally liberal freshmen. "If the caucus [becomes] king," Maurice Rosenblatt recently wrote in *The Washingtonian*, "then Burton will reign."

These people are consummate actors. Some mask ineptitude while others conceal brilliance

Bob Eckhardt

Sixty-one, Democrat, 8th District of Texas (Houston). Though Eckhardt arrived in Congress only eight years ago, he has become a quiet force. May be the best constitutional lawyer in a body of lawyers; though not a member of the Judiciary Committee, his suggestions were welcomed by those attempting to lay a proper, legal impeachment base. Eckhardt drew up the legal document answering Dick Nixon's contention that executive privilege protected him and his from close examinations. His conversation is spiced with references to English Common Law or the Great Roman Code.

An accomplished raconteur, Eckhardt spins anecdotes, quotes from obscure poets, the classics, philosophers, the Biblical prophets, history's lessons and an astonishing variety of periodicals. Within a week of election day last year, a friend discovered Eckhardt reading at midday in the cabin he built with his own hands so as not to disturb a single tree in a pine thicket outside Houston. "I guess I ought to be at some shopping center shaking hands," he grinned, "but not only is this more fun, it seems a lot more *civilized.*" I once heard two friends almost come to blows in arguing whether Eckhardt most reminded them of Lincoln or Thoreau.

In the Texas Legislature Eckhardt was for years a lonely voice of reason and reform: when Tories attempted to cut off state aid to mothers with illegitimate children, he quashed it with one withering comment: "I do not worry so much about the natural bastards of Texas as I do the self-made ones"; he was a civil rights advocate in a time when most Texas politicians were signing so-called Southern Manifestos. Though he talks with a dirt farmer's drawl, Eckhardt quickly grasps the complexities of oil and gas legislation, economic policies and environmental problems—and he's deceptively deadly in cross-examinations. Affable, old-shoe accommodating, he's liked and respected not only in the House but among a wide range of intellectuals across the country. One of the few who can pick up the phone and quickly reach Ralph Nader. "Bob's not highly placed," a friend says, "but his intelligence, logic and sense of justice give him a certain standing. People respond to him."

John Moss

Fifty-nine, Democrat, 3rd District of California (Sacramento): "John's an Old Testament prophet," a friend grins. "In stentorian tones he lays out the Great Truths of the Ages. And he's usually right." Repeatedly, colleagues mention Moss' courage: "John votes the way he believes even if he's alone or if Hell freezes over." The further he moves away from floor debate—in committee and subcommittee—the more flexible and pragmatic he becomes "because that's where the public business must be hammered out, and John knows that everyone must make realistic accommodations." Slightly erratic, Moss can become a tyrant against evasive witnesses and strike them down. "But of all the men I know who exercise power," his friend Bob Eckhardt says, "he's the fairest. There's a compassionate side many people don't see." Still, some find Moss stubborn, ultra-competitive. For years he's pounded away at government secrecy. Also knows business and finance. Superb small-unit operator. Influential as member of Democratic Steering and Policy Committee.

Otis Pike

Fifty-three, Democrat, 1st District of New York (Riverhead, Long Island). May be the most cultured man in the House; enjoys poetry, art, good music in a body where these generally are not among top interests. "There's a little of Gene McCarthy in Otis," a colleague says. "He's pixieish, a little unpredictable. You may not be able to wholly depend on his reaction just when you're certain you can. He's in-

dependent and kind of devil-may-care."

Educated at Princeton and Columbia, Pike moves well in any social circle; has an excellent dry wit; may be the only House member to whom "debonair" truly applies. Generally an ideological middle-of-the-roader. He has been the bane of Pentagon brass in attacking military waste: flying pay for armchair generals and admirals, expensive new killing toys. Deadpan, he once did a 10-minute routine on the Army's having bought a 20-year supply of doorknobs until even red-faced brass had to laugh at the absurdities.

While on the Armed Services Committee, Pike, more than anyone, won battles over the crusty old gun-loving

Paul Sarbanes: a L.L.B., Phi Beta Kappa and Rhodes Scholar, but not living up to his potential.

Tory chairman, Eddie Hebert of Louisiana. "Eddie's a born bully," one member said, "but he couldn't bully Otis." Pike's stock has risen in the 94th Congress since he joined the Ways and Means Committee.

Frank Thompson Jr.

Fifty-six, Democrat, 4th District of New Jersey (Trenton). A number of his colleagues love to hate "Tompy" Thompson. The rest love him like a brother. Probably the most controversial personality in the House. "Tompy's a natural-born smart-ass," a friend says. "He's probably got the best sense of humor here, and he's willing to use it regardless of whether it helps him or hurts him. He just can't help it. What he refuses to learn is that some people can't take a joke and hate feeling they're being played for a fool." Others consider Thompson excessively liberal or too intellectual. Ohio's Wayne Hays, himself not generally more popular than the plague, nonetheless defeated Thompson to retain his chairmanship. Showing little respect for institutional sensitivities, Thompson chose Missouri's Dick Bolling—another not dear to many House hearts—to manage his campaign. "Dick's my friend," he explained it.

Thompson rather seems to relish the hate of anti-intellectuals and is able to handle all who jump him in debate. Not many try anymore. "I think he's misunderstood," says another liberal who's worked with Thompson for House reforms. "Tompy's generous in appraising his fellows, he's extremely able and he doesn't lord it over people. He just treats the pompous bastards around here like he treats everyone else—and they can't take it." Thompson is the official culture-vulture of the House: in his freshman year he introduced an omnibus federal arts bill, promptly hooted down by philistines and farmers who giggled of toe-dancing and finger-painting. Undaunted, he broke the bill down and passed it piece by piece—even though it took ten years. You can thank Tompy for the Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts, among other goodies. Influential in the Democratic Study Group, Thompson may fare better with the new, liberal majority his party enjoys.

Morris (Mo) Udall

Fifty-two, Democrat, 2nd District of Arizona (Tucson). Some are calling Mo Udall the first serious presidential candidate with House roots since the days of buggy whips. Instrumental in the passage of the Campaign Finance Reform Bill (which limits large contributions and calls for matching federal grants), Udall is one of its first beneficiaries as a dark-horse, under-financed presidential hopeful.

Physically imposing at 6 feet, 5 inches tall, and keenly intelligent, Udall is strongly driven by ambition. Hardly had he warmed his congressional seat (after replacing brother Stewart, JFK's and LBJ's secretary of interior) before he ran a hopeless race against House Speaker John McCormack; in 1970 he challenged for House majority leader but finished second to the late Hale Boggs in a five-man race. "Mo could easily have become a laughingstock," says a colleague, "but he picked himself up, worked hard, mended his fences and won new respect. I don't think he knows what 'quit' means."

Udall was among the first to turn on the Vietnam war, is a dedicated environmentalist (he wrote the anti-strip-mining bill) and has a liberal record save for labor votes. "Arizona has no labor unions," a friend defends. "What the hell's he gonna do?"

Crisp in his operations on the floor. Udall's total impact among colleagues is among the highest in the House. He can win votes for a bill. "Mo's had to overcome many jealousies," a friend says. "He's tall, has rugged good looks, he's thrice ambitious and at times a shade conceited. That combination can get you killed around here. But he's so damned kind and smart and he *cares* so much that he'll win you over." One of the more dogged advocates of House reform, Udall has for years held seminars for incoming freshmen to teach them how to be more effective members; he's the author of two books on the House and one on Arizona Laws of Evidence. Involved in the pre-primary presidential grind, he isn't a day-to-day factor in the House as in the past. Thirty-five to 40 members have endorsed his presidential candidacy, however, and his in-House prestige was never higher. Udall has a dry, self-deprecating wit that some are asking him to get under control: "In a serious time people don't want to hear a presidential candidate cracking jokes. Remember Adlai Stevenson?"

OK, fans, there you have 'em. It's only honest to say that good men and women probably have been overlooked. Remember, however, nobody's perfect: when research began a few short months ago, one name consistently cropped up in evaluations. But unforeseen events intervened, and now nobody recommends Wilbur Mills of Arkansas anymore. ●

Bloodbaths in perspective

By Roger Neville Williams

It's bloodbath time again. And it appears that a lot of politicians are going to be disappointed if the Khmer insurgents don't cause one when they come to power in Cambodia. It seems that many of our national leaders need a bloodbath in Indochina, are almost wishing for one, in order to justify the one they've already caused.

President Ford tells us on TV that "the Communists" are going to kill all the schoolteachers, the artists, the officials in Cambodia. Vice-President Rockefeller last month told a lot of wealthy Republicans in New Jersey that if the communists took over in South Vietnam, a *million* people would be killed. Communists are like that; never trust them—unless they want to build a Pepsi-Cola factory.

Nixon was a big bloodbath man. He was also a liar. But Watergate hadn't hit the fan yet when he solemnly said in a televised speech in April 1972 that we had to keep up the fight in Vietnam if only to protect our friends from "the inevitable bloodbath that would follow for hundreds of thousands who had dared to oppose communist aggression." The bloodbath talk was a great salve to the conscience of a nation then involved in massacring those in Indochina who dared to oppose American policies.

In July of that same year, Nixon invoked the bloodbath threat once more, upper lip sweating, as he told us that "a minimum of 500,000" peasants had been killed by the communists in North Vietnam, a small addendum to history that had escaped most scholars. People believed him. Presidents might not always tell the truth—LBJ wasn't too good at it—but they don't actually flat outright *lie* before the nation on network TV, or so we believed that blissful summer of '72 when 200 B-52s a day carpet-bombed the Indochinese into accepting the Nixon version of history.

As Clark Clifford put it recently, the speculation over bloodbaths in Cambodia "must be weighed against the certainty that the war itself has been and is a bloodbath"

Bloodbaths gained currency under Stalin, who was genuinely good at them and who set the cause of social justice on this planet back at least a hundred years. Bloodbaths were also popular in China during the long civil war—civil wars are bloody affairs; our own cost a million dead.Whenever the peasants shot a landlord, which was not uncommon, it became a mass slaughter by the Reds. When undisciplined Nationalist forces slaughtered thousands,and burned and looted as they were wont to do, it went unreported. With the help of truly great propagandists like Henry Luce and Joe Alsop, Chiang became a saint and the People's Republic went unrecognized for 22 years.

As a student in 1964, I sent away for the literature of the China Lobby, formally known as The Committee of One Million Against the Admission of Red China to the United Nations. I don't know about the one million, but I was amazed to find that over three-fourths of all incumbent senators and congressmen endorsed this outfit and attached their names to the lobby's newsletter. Their pamphlets describing what the kill-crazed communist slave-masters had done in China talked of bloodbaths totaling 50 million killed. I searched through other organs of the ultra-Right, *Human Events* and *National Review*, and found conservative writers calling the 50 million figure "conservative." (As for the China Lobby today, its queen, Anna Chennault, was just appointed by President Ford to the board of the new Bicentennial Commission.)

If 50 million Chinese were slaughtered by the ruthless communists, Nixon's

Williams is currently writing a book on the POWs and the Indochina air war.

PHOTOGRAPH BY P. JONES GRIFFITHS/MAGNUM HAND COLOR BY STEVE PHILLIPS

half million for North Vietnam and his projected "hundreds of thousands" for South Vietnam must be right, right? Let's look at the North. We know that people were executed during the early land reform program in the DRV; we know of this mainly through General Giap's 1956 speech on the land reform "errors." Ho Chi Minh, the story goes, cried when he learned of the killings in the countryside; he ordered the Chinese land reform advisers home. Contemporary scholars do not put the number of landlords executed higher than 2,000. Some say no more than 800.

While former Diem psy-war agent Hoang Van Chi, an ex-Northerner, was spreading the half million bloodbath figure through the State Department, which employs him, Nguyen Minh Vy, an ex-Southerner, was in Hanoi telling visitors: "It was terrible under Diem. . . .The French arrested for concrete crimes . . . but Diem imprisoned people ideologically, without evidence. The police said, 'You are a former resistance member, therefore you are communist' . . . . In the six years, 1954 through 1959, 150,000 were killed." That figure is no doubt high, but Diem's "campaign of terror," as author Francis FitzGerald calls it, is the real bloodbath story of Indochina. *Official* Diem figures show no less than 30,000 former Viet Minh cadres were put into concentration and "re-education" camps. Historian Joseph Buttinger says Diem used his troops "in a manner reminiscent of the Nazi Storm Troopers." Diem and Nhu "subscribed to the notion that the only good communist is a dead one." These were the perfect allies for the U.S., where the only good Indians, as the Denver newspaper editor had once said, were dead Indians.

Current American fears of a bloodbath by the communists in Cambodia, and in Vietnam after that goes, are founded largely on what is known as "The Hue Massacre." This supposedly took place during the battle of Hue in February 1968. The fighting for Hue was the darkest moment of the Vietnam war; in terms of destruction and loss of life, Hue stands as a symbol as evocative as Dresden or Stalingrad. Reuters reported 90 percent of the city was flattened. *Le Monde* wrote, "Bodies lay rotting in the streets for days and sanitary facilities broke down."

Hue was always sympathetic to the NLF—a proud city that the Americans disliked for they could never work their will there. The GVN liked it even less. Saigon's interior minister said in 1967, "If the people of Hue revolt, there is only one thing to do. Wipe Hue off the face of the earth."

In Hue the bloodbath came from the sky, showers of steel into pools of blood

When the NLF and North Vietnamese forces entered Hue, they met with little resistance. In many districts they were openly received as liberators. Losing a city so easily maddened the Americans, who ordered in Marine Phantoms, called up the big guns of the 7th Fleet and opened up with artillery. After 26 days, *Time* reported that "Hue lay in smoking, putrescent ruin." Journalist Wilfred Burchett, one of the few Western experts on the NLF, told me in Paris, "The NLF sanitary squads were forced to bury air strike victims in mass graves nightly."

In Hue, as in the rest of Indochina, the bloodbath came from the sky, showers of steel into pools of blood, 7.3 million tons of bombs, 16 million tons of bullets and shells. On the front page of the *Times,* Marine jets could be seen dropping napalm on the city. "Substantial numbers" of bombing runs by Marine and Navy fighters were reported. UPI's Al Webb, wounded in Hue, watched U.S. artillery and tanks level sections of the city, block by block, with no regard for the civilians huddling in their houses.The city had been wholly occupied by the communists; it had to be retaken at all costs, destroyed to be saved.

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Doctor Alje Vennema, director of Canada's aid mission to Vietnam, was working at the Canadian hospital in Hue at the time the fighters came over. He watched as his hospital was bombed. He went to the house of a friend, the president of the university, who was billeting North Vietnamese officers, and in the street he saw Marine Phantoms dive directly toward him and release their bombs just beyond, over the most crowded part of the city. He photographed the jets as they pounded the city to pieces, and afterward resigned from the mission and returned to Canada to begin a national lecture tour.

Vennema refused to visit the U.S. with his Kodachrome hell and painful descriptions of the Hue nightmare, but he did treat interested Canadians to color slides of children with arms and legs freshly blown off, with bellies ripped open, women with faces burned beyond recognition from napalm, still alive, babies burned to cinder dolls and people returning to the rubble of their homes and streets to find thousands of bloated, rat-eaten corpses, friends and neighbors caught in the American air strikes. Had enough Americans been able to see Vennema's photos, they would have ended the war right there.

Now for the "massacre." It's clear from available evidence that as many as 300 to 500 people may have been executed by the NLF in all of the Hue district. But the evidence is as confusing as it is interesting. The mayor of Hue, one Col. Phan Van Khoa, was the source of most U.S. and British newsmen's reports. He later claimed the communists had executed 300 officials and buried them in a mass grave. But on February 22, in the midst of the battle, he announced there would be public executions, that week, of "communist agents." An American official in Hue told a reporter, "There will be summary executions, public executions of VC and hopefully some of the infrastructure." (In Vietnam anti-American pro-NLF civilians were called "infrastructure," sort of like a disease, like having Vee Cee.) As the Tet battles raged, the story was lost.

After Hue was reoccupied, Col. Khoa and other Vietnamese officials began taking newsmen to see "mass graves," graves of 10, 20 or 30 people, some of whom had apparently been summarily executed, a few obviously so. Nineteen graves, containing 1,000 bodies, were discovered in all. That's not many considering that U.S. as well as unofficial estimates put the civilian death toll from air strikes and shelling at 3,000 to 10,000—Dr. Vennema is certain that at least 10,000 died. Groups of people were found with hands tied with wire and bullet holes in the back of their heads, confirming two things: the NLF had, indeed, executed certain officials and "enemies

PHOTOGRAPH BY GAMMA

Khmer Rouge captured in 1973: can any future bloodbath by the insurgents be worse than past B-52 carpet bombings ?

of the people"; and Col. Khoa had carried out *his* threat. A USAID man said, "For many Vietnamese in Hue, there were a lot of old scores to settle. . . . Some of the hates go a long way back."

American USIA official Douglas Pike, whom FitzGerald says "distorted his facts" in his book, *Vietcong*, went to Hue and claimed that 2,800 bodies had been exhumed by mid-March '68, but no one corroborated his figure. Here was the "massacre" the Americans had been waiting for. TV newsmen dutifully trudged up to Hue to film the grisly sight, focusing in on skulls with holes in them, and voicing over commentary on the savagery of the communists without mention of GVN reprisals or the huge casualties caused by the air strikes. Neither was Saigon police commissioner Col. Loan's televised execution of a "VC suspect" in Saigon recalled. In Canada Dr. Vennema later said, "Civilian fatalities attributed to atrocities committed by the enemy were more than likely a result of American firepower." He called the behavior of American forces at Hue "inhuman."

But a bloodbath had been born, and it was fondly remembered thereafter in dozens of presidential speeches and State Department handouts. The dead of Hue would not rest in peace. In this body-count crazed land, Saigon officials continued exhuming these remains through 1968 and most of '69, looking for dead to attribute to the enemy's ruthlessness. Strange, but they must have continued to dig up Pike's 2,800 because they never came up with a higher figure. Americans tended to forget the importance to Vietnamese of proper burial; even a "mass grave" is better than leaving people to rot in the streets. We discounted the possibility that the enemy could be decent enough to bury the victims of our air strikes; they would only bury bodies to cover up mass executions.

The press reported that the graves had been "carefully concealed," to hide "massacres." With no evidence other than, at most, a few hundred bodies that were clearly executions, and with this evidence completely in the hands of GVN officials and interpreters, the massacre story grew. On November 13, 1969, a year and a half later, an AP story said, without qualification, that 3,000 had been killed by "Vietcong assassination squads." Again, TV news showed more exhumations near Hue, lots of Vietnamese wailing, understandably, and a single grave that now, alone, contained "2,000 bodies." Curiously, this was the week that My Lai came to light, and, even more curious, the U.S. Embassy on November 24 suddenly found a long-lost enemy document that, it said, had been captured near Hue in 1968. The Americans said the document said the NLF admitted to successfully "eliminating 2,900 people at Hue." Then, on December 6, Robert Elegant in a long piece in the Los Angeles *Times* reported Douglas Pike's recent "intensive investigation" of events in Hue in which he concluded that "the Communists had slaughtered almost 6,000 civilians for political purposes." This was double all previous figures. Pike, a good friend of the White House, known to most journalists as little more than a propagandist for the U.S. policy in Indochina, said the "massacre of Hue will be the pattern for nationwide action should the Communists conquer South Vietnam. . . . If the Communists win decisively . . . the night of the long knives would begin."

Meanwhile, as some U.S. newsmen tripped over themselves to get the Hue massacre story, the now infamous U.S. Phoenix program went almost totally unreported. With its own assassination squads financed by the CIA through USAID, Phoenix was completing its business of murdering, by William Colby's own estimate, 21,000 "infrastructure" (read "people"). Funny, but the highest U.S. government estimates I've ever seen for "VC assassination of village leaders" for the entire war since 1960 was 17,000. Phoenix topped that in three years.

Even less well reported was the air war. The Senate subcommittee on refugees ultimately estimated that at least 400,000 civilians had been killed in the war, most of these deaths "stimulated" by

PHOTOGRAPH BY P. JONES GRIFFITHS/MAGNUM

After the U.S. bombing of Cholon in '68, the bodies were buried by bulldozer.

our air strikes, some by artillery, plus 80-100,000 in North Vietnam. Dead soldiers, North and South, added up to another million (Laos and Cambodia weren't counted). For comparison's sake, 305,000 German civilians were killed by Allied bombing in World War II.

Whatever happened at Hue was nothing compared to what went on in Cholon during Tet '68. "Allies bomb Cholon," read the New York *Times*' headline. Gunships "on station" over residential areas of Saigon pumped out their withering steel spray from the mini-guns the Vietnamese named "muttering death." There was no concern for civilians during the bombing of Saigon, in which more people were killed than in the five years of bombing Hanoi. As Westmoreland once said, "In the Orient, life is cheap." How cheap I learned over lunch with a middle-aged USAID official at the snack-bar restaurant atop USAID # 1 in Saigon.

I asked him if he had figures on the number of civilians killed in Saigon during the Tet offensive. "By the VC?" he asked. "No," I said, "I mean by our gunships and bombing." His office dealt with refugees, and he would know if anyone would. "Well, it was in the thousands, I can tell you that. After the heaviest fighting in Cholon was over and American troops came in, they found about 3,000 bodies in one area of the rubble out there. They were already beginning to smell. The commander called our office and asked what to do with them, if they should collect them and try to get Vietnamese authorities to identify them. But they were smelling, so we just told them to leave them where they were and plow them under when they brought in the Rome Plows [bulldozers]."

I asked him if the Saigon government had said anything about this. "I don't think they even knew," he said, "or cared. Anyway, all those corpses were smelling and we had to do something. No one wants a smelly corpse." He laughed.

The Senate subcommittee on refugees estimates that 430,000 civilians have been killed in Vietnam—the majority because of U.S. air strikes and artillery

No one wanted those corpses, anyway, except their relatives, who weren't allowed to collect them, for they couldn't be pinned on the Viet Cong. If a Vietnamese wanted a corpse, he had to go to Hue, where he'd be handed a shovel and told to dig and wail. While the networks ran footage of the "mass graves" and "massacres" at Hue, no footage that I can recall ever appeared of the Cholon bloodbath.

During the offensive, an NLF detachment was also holed-up at the racetrack in Saigon. Afterward, large numbers of graves were found. U.S. military spokesmen said, in their press releases, that the dead were "massacre victims," and they were duly reported as such. Then it was discovered through prisoner interrogations that the graves contained civilian victims of air strikes who had been buried by NLF cadres despite the seige. It was the logic of Vietnam: all "step on bodies," as the U.S. command called visible corpses, were "VC"; all bodies found in graves were massacre victims. And bodies found in the ruins of Cholon, Can Tho, Ben Tre, Phan Thiet, Vinh Long, Phuoc Binh and Quang Tri, all heavily bombed, went unreported because nobody wants a smelly corpse.

B-52s were especially good at bloodbaths. A civilian American official who made a practice of flying his helicopter over target areas within five minutes of a B-52 strike told a *Times* reporter how "lucrative" certain raids were. He described one: "Every single bomb crater is surrounded with bodies, wrecked equipment and dazed and bleeding people. At one hole there were 40 or 50 men, all in green uniforms, but without their weapons, lying around in an obvious state of shock. We sent in helicopter gunships which quickly put them out of their misery." Why take prisoners when life is so

cheap in the Orient?

Neak Luong in Cambodia taught us what the 52s did when they hit civilian towns—200 dead, hundreds maimed. The U.S. Embassy tried to keep reporters away, and Neak Luong nearly went unreported, as so many others assuredly did.

Don Dawson, a former B-52 co-pilot, recalls the Cambodia raids, which in four years marshaled almost as much metal death over that country as we had dropped on North Vietnam. Flying out of Thailand in 1973, he remembers seeing a haze of twinkling lights in their target areas where they had been told there were no people, only the enemy. They were hamlets and villages. Much of the bombing was done electronically in the later stages of the war, using sensors that recorded the sounds of enemy "troop movements" and anything else. Dawson says they were dropping fuse-delayed CBUs (pellet-bombs), and one day a tape, recorded off of the sensors, was brought to the briefing room and played. "We could hear people screaming and crying after the delayed bombs went off," says Dawson. "The Air Force was real proud. This showed us we were doing a good job."

Capt. Dawson got fed up with that bloodbath and told his commander one day, "I can't do it anymore." He refused a direct order to bomb and faced court martial (he now works for Americans for Amnesty in New York). All the rockets that have fallen on Phnom Penh in the last month don't equal the explosive force or weight of *one* three-plane B-52 mission. Our government unloaded 150 B-52s a day, for five months, over Cambodia *after* the Peace Agreement was signed and the POWs returned.

Some Americans—like columnists Evans and Novak, who seem to be eagerly awaiting the "countrywide" slaughter so they can blame it on Congress—don't know a bloodbath when they see one. If the insurgents lined up 100,000 people and shot them, it wouldn't begin to equal the civilian toll of the American bombing in Cambodia.

Columnists on the Right are now all crying bloodbath and insisting that the promised seven executions will only be the beginning. They never mention the B-52 strikes over Cambodia, except to deplore their ending, as did Philip Habib of the State Department this month. Habib's argument, which is going to tell historians a lot about the U.S.A. in the late 20th century, is that we could have prevented the bloodbath he earnestly predicts if we only had been "allowed" to continue the bombing. That is to say, our own bloodbath. ●

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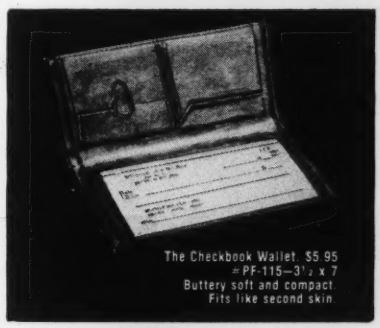

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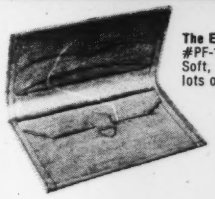

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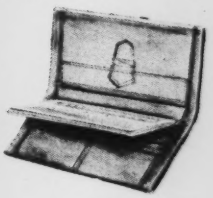

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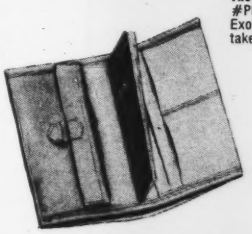

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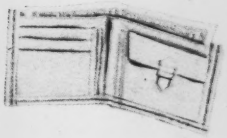

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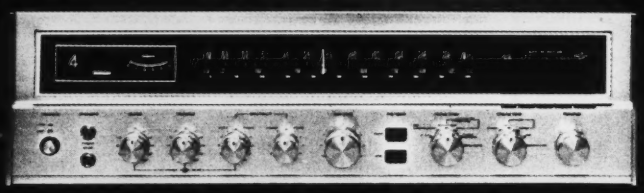
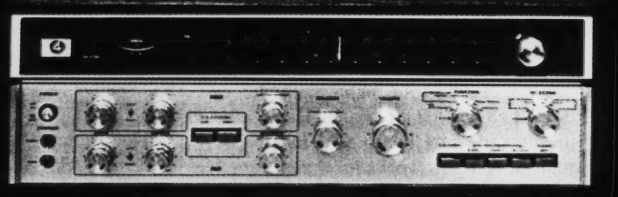
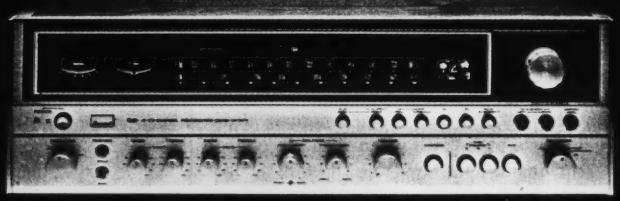


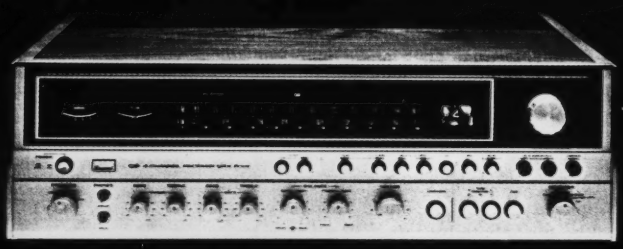
The Sansui QRX-3500



The Sansui QRX-6001



The Sansui QRX-7001



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Comparison Chart

Power Range: 9-15 Watts

MANUFACTURER MODEL	SANSUI QRX-3000	Fisher 334	Kenwood KR-6340	Pioneer QX-646	Sony SQR-4750	Technics SA-8000X
QS DECODING	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	—	Simple RM	Simple RM	—	Adjust-able RM
SQ DECODING	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	Simple SQ	Simple SQ	Simple SQ	Full logic SQ	—
SYNTHESIZING SURROUND	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	—	—	—	—	—
SYNTHESIZING HALL-AMBIENCE	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	—	—	—	Simple Matrix	—
CD-4 DEMODULATING	Adaptor	Built-in	Adaptor	Built-in	Adaptor	Built-in

Power Range: 16-24 Watts

MANUFACTURER MODEL	SANSUI QRX-3500	Fisher 534	Harman Kardon 800+	Marantz 4240	Pioneer QX-747	Sony SQR-6750
QS DECODING	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	—	Simple RM	Adjustable RM	Simple RM	—
SQ DECODING	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	Full Logic SQ	Simple SQ	—	Simple SQ	Full Logic SQ
SYNTHESIZING SURROUND	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	—	—	—	—	—
SYNTHESIZING HALL-AMBIENCE	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	Matrix	—	—	—	Simple Matrix
CD-4 DEMODULATING	Adaptor	Built-in	Built-in	Adaptor	Built-in	Adaptor

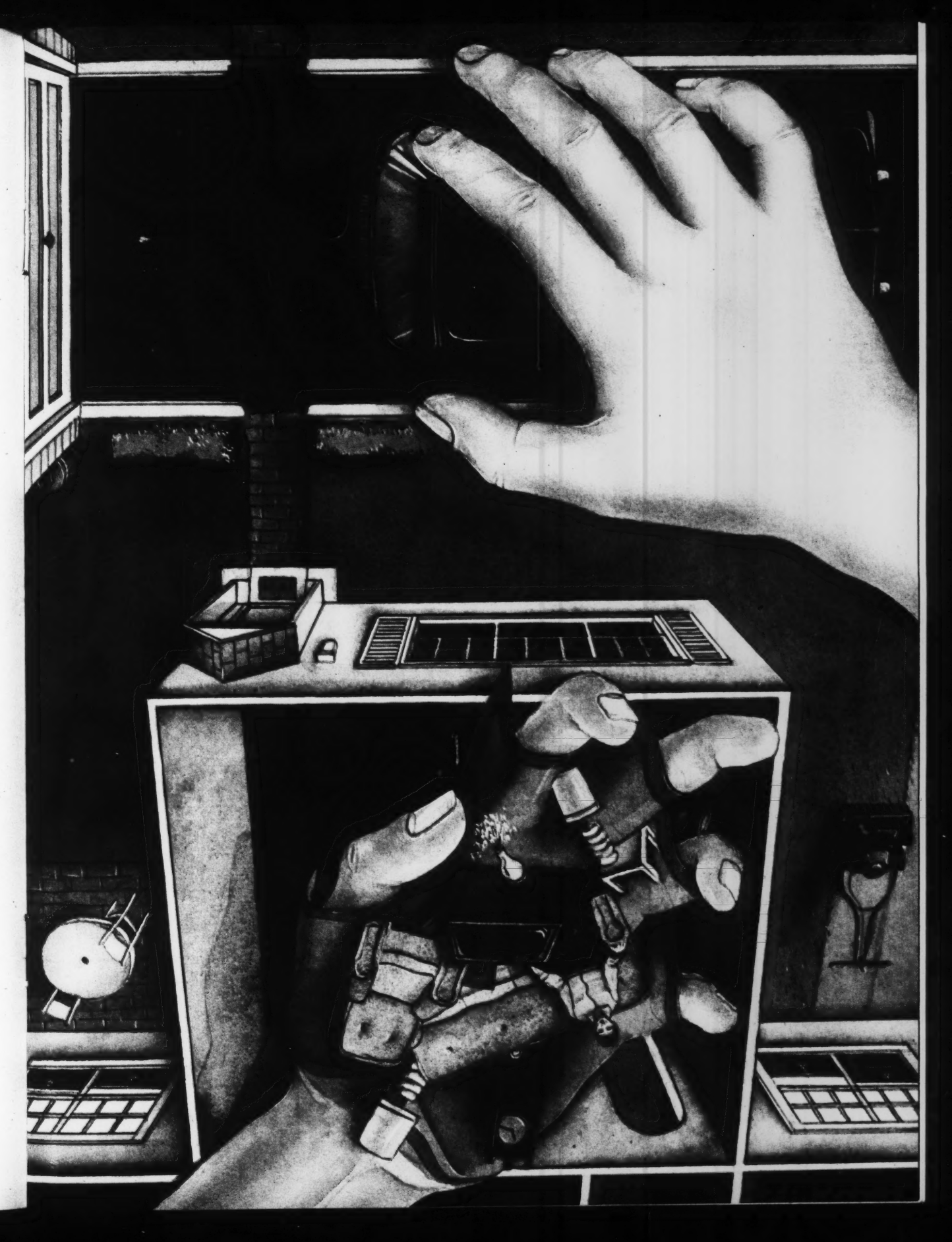
Power Range: 25-34 Watts

MANUFACTURER MODEL	SANSUI QRX-6001	Harmon Kardon 900+	Kenwood KR-8340	Marantz 4270	Sony SQR-8750	Technics 8500
QS DECODING	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	Simple RM	Simple RM	Adjustable RM	—	Simple RM
SQ DECODING	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	Simple SQ	Simple SQ	—	Full Logic SQ	—
SYNTHESIZING SURROUND	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	—	—	—	—	—
SYNTHESIZING HALL-AMBIENCE	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	—	—	—	Simple Matrix	Simple Matrix
CD-4 DEMODULATING	Built-in	Built-in	Adaptor	Adaptor	Adaptor	Built-in

Power Range: 35-45 Watts

MANUFACTURER MODEL	SANSUI QRX-7001	Fisher 634	Kenwood KR-8840	Marantz 4300	Pioneer QX949	Sylvania RQ-3747
QS DECODING	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	—	Simple RM	Adjustable RM	Simple RM	—
SQ DECODING	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	Full Logic SQ	Full Logic SQ	—	Simple SQ	Simple SQ
SYNTHESIZING SURROUND	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	—	—	—	—	—
SYNTHESIZING HALL-AMBIENCE	Built-in VARIO-MATRIX	Simple Matrix	—	—	—	—
CD-4 DEMODULATING	Built-in	Built-in	Built-in	Adaptor	Built-in	Adaptor

SQ™ – CBS Inc. CD-4™ – JVC Inc. QS™ – Sansui Electric Co., Ltd.



On being taken

Barney Matthews, Collection Man, says the Laws of Repossession are simple: (A) always use surprise, (B) never listen to reason and (C) if necessary, threaten to use force

By Robert Ward

Barney Matthews is taking me on a tour of his house. It's an interesting tour, very interesting, but the interest is not so much in what you see—there's a color TV, a dinette, a family entertainment system (radio-stereo, tape deck console)—the usual things one finds in an average middle-class home. The interesting part is that Barney paid practically nothing for any of these items. And even though Barney "is no longer proud" of the gruesome way he came to own these interesting goodies (outside there's a nice boat—Barney got it for $75; its retail price is $600), there is still just a smidgen of the "old Barney" in his mellow Top of the Voice:

"I've furnished this entire house with repossessions," he says. "That color TV you see over there is a repossession . . . my piano, which I keep upstairs in the den, is one of the best deals . . . I think I got it for something like $79 . . . a Baldwin piano . . . I mean it barely cost me anything at all. No, the fact is working for the bank hasn't hurt me at all on a material level. It's my mind that it hurt. That's why I finally got out. Believe you me, when I left the bank, it was like the weight of the world was off my shoulders."

Barney smiles and shows me a set of matching brass lamps.

"Very nice," I say.

Barney is beaming at me, but suddenly his little mouth goes down at the corners.

"That was a very nasty job . . . that repossession . . . there was a color TV there, too, and the little girl was watching *Sesame Street*. She had a cat on her shoulder and when we had to unplug the TV she started crying, saying how she was missing *Sesame Street* and please don't take the TV . . . and Malcom just looked down at her and said, 'Shut up brat, or we'll take the cat, too.' "

Barney shakes his head and leads me downstairs.

We have some more Chianti, and he begins to reminisce.

"The bank is in big trouble now," he says, running his hand through his thick, recently grown-out hair. "In Rochester alone, the collection department has a record number of delinquent accounts. Many of them are four and five months behind and have no hope of ever paying. The collection agency in the main office is really getting panicky . . . they've stepped up the sadism and torture techniques. I know that sounds a bit melodramatic, but the truth is the kinds of tactics we use every day in the Repossessions Game are really not a whole lot different from what the Nazis did. The law is simple: (A) always use surprise, (B) never listen to reason or pay any attention to the person's story and (C) if necessary, threaten or use force. We're a little different from the Nazis because I

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DENIS ORLOFF

never saw anyone really *use* force! Usually, just a threat brings about the desired results. But with the depression really setting in, I wouldn't be surprised to see more and more cases of outright brutality. Hell, when I quit three months ago, they were getting into all kinds of new things . . . and now it's that much worse, and six months from now its going to be even worse than now, ad infinitum. So the Collection Boys are simply going to have to step up the sadism."

Barney nods his head and sits back in his comfortable Mexican couch (recently purchased at the Repossession Auction for $35).

"What's really going on out there?" I ask him. (I drink his wine and wonder whose glasses these were last week.)

"Well, start with the average phone conversation. The whole thing is reaching new heights of sadism . . . man, we scream at people, we call them any name in the book, we out and out threaten them, and if none of that works, we simply call their bosses. Oh, it's amazing . . . but the sickest thing of all is that the American people are such wimps that they will take just about anything we dish out. It makes me wonder if there isn't some strange S-M bond between the Collection Man and the guy he's tooling. That's a bit far out, I suppose . . . but still . . . the way people don't fight back is very frightening."

He sips his Chianti, walks over to his record player, puts on Leo Kottke, the guitar soars and zooms, filling the room with sound.

"Great set . . . I was lucky to get it . . . though I'm ashamed of myself. God, I hate the bank . . . what a bunch of fascists . . . . You think that word is a little strong? All right, let me tell you about Malcolm. Yeah, listen to this."

Working out with Malcolm

Malcolm is a 28-year-old high school graduate. He buys his cheap cloth Continental style suits from J. C. Penny's, has his hair razor cut by a beautician at his wife's beauty salon and drives a big Pontiac. He is slender, dark-complexioned and has a pencil mustache. His overall physical appearance is that of a slightly faded and seedy Zachary Scott. One of the bank's leading Collectors, Malcolm is famous for his epic screaming battles on the telephone. He is renowned for his fearless baiting of old men, his tongue-lashings of exhausted and defeated women; and he is lionized for his great wit and sense of high style. Malcolm's specialty is putting down the Slugs, a term the Collection Boys use for we Americans who cannot afford to pay for the things we are supposed to have. (Barney Matthews: " 'Slugs' was Malcolm's favorite term. He used it over and over again, until it got really boring to the rest of us. But to Malcolm there was a kind of magic in the word. It made him feel superior to all those 'Slugs' out there. He used to run around the office saying, 'They are *all* Slugs. Slow to Move and Slow to Pay. Ha ha . . . .We'll get 'em all.' ") Malcolm's favorite trick is Public Humiliation. In all of the Rochester Bank's many branches, there is no one quite so good as Malcolm when it comes to P.H.

Today, Malcolm and Barney are on their way to the North Rochester Dairy Queen, where they want to visit a likable young man named Timmy Anderson. Timmy is 22 and just out of college. In order to get to his job as short-order cook (he majored in radio broadcasting but there were no jobs), Timmy had to buy a car. The car was financed by Malcolm and Barney's bank, but Timmy is two payments behind. Being late, of course, is no longer unusual. Practically everyone who owes money is late these days. But Timmy has gotten tired of Malcolm's abusive phone calls, and yesterday he began to fight back a little.

"The tactics we use every day in the Repossessions Game are not a whole lot different from what the Nazis did"

"You know what dat creep tole me when I talked to him yestuhday?" says Malcolm.

"No," says Barney, looking straight ahead at the road. "What was that?"

"He says I should drop dead and hangs up. Do you believe that?"

Barney shakes his head and tries to keep his eyes on the white line. Lately, he has dreaded going to see people. There has been real hostility coming back from people that he hasn't felt before. They still don't actually *do* anything . . . but . . . he has this weird feeling. He has started thinking seriously about carrying a .38 police special with him. Malcolm doesn't go anywhere without his. He's even made a little gun rack for it inside the glove compartment, like the detectives on television.

"You know what we shoulda done?" says Malcolm, slapping the wheel and nodding his head. "We shoulda gotten some outside help to go with us. Ole Gogarty would have scared the hell out of him, wouldn't he?"

Gogarty is on the Rochester Police Force. Malcolm is in awe of him. Many times after a repossession, Malcolm goes over to the station and shows Gogarty what he's hauled in. Gogarty likes that and lets Malcolm pal around with the other cops.

On some nights Gogarty picks up a quick $20 by acting as Malcolm's Outside Help. On such occasions he carries his police gun on his hip, and if there is any resistance from the victim, Gogarty lets his coat ride up just a little—just enough to show the gun handle. He never takes it out of the case. That would be a little much. It's enough just to flash it.

Now, as they drive down the flat country lane, with the grey sky hanging over them like a huge cancerous lung and with stalks of trees blowing quietly in the cold winter wind, Barney begins to think of what it would be like if Gogarty came to his own door. Lately, Gogarty and Malcolm are in his thoughts all the time. The strange thing is that when he imagines Gogarty, he cannot see a face. Just a huge set of shoulders, a red shock of hair, whipped into the air like blazing grass, and a smooth grey patch of skin underneath. The man is wearing a grey battered raincoat and has black surplus shoes . . . and he is taking everything away from Barney . . . his wife and his children and all the appliances . . . . He is going through all of Barney's rooms, moving slowly, inexorably toward the door . . . .

Malcolm and Barney pull up in front of the Dairy Queen. The green Pinto is parked off by the sign—Hamburgers-Malted Milks-Thick Shakes. Behind the car the trees are bending and shaking, and Barney doesn't want to walk up to the window. He wants to run away, but, of course, you can't run.

The two Collection Men go into the indoor service department and take their place in line. Malcolm is grinning at Barney, giggling a little, the way you used to do when you were taking someone's pencil case back in elementary school.

As the customers buy their burgers, Cokes and French fries, Barney keeps thinking of Gogarty . . . that skin, all bunched and wrinkled around the middle of the face, where a nose and eyes and

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mouth should be . . . carrot-top head moving through the rooms, taking everything.

The Repossessions Men reach the window. Timmy Anderson turns toward them and smiles his Dairy Queen smile:

"Can I help you, sirs?"

"Yes," says Malcolm, "I'd like a cup of coffee."

"Will that be all, sir?"

"No, one more thing."

"Yes?"

MUCH LOUDER NOW SO THAT EVERYONE IN THE LITTLE ROOM WILL HEAR!

"I'LL TAKE YOUR CAR KEYS, TOO."

"What?"

Malcolm drops the Bank Collection Agency Card on the counter.

"I SAID I'LL TAKE YOUR CAR KEYS . . . READ THE CARD, PUNK."

The kid's mouth drops open. He can't believe it. He was going to send in the payment . . . right here on the job . . . what if his boss were here, instead of out at the car wash . . . everyone is looking at him, Jesus . . . he's terrified, dying of embarrassment . . . .

"Yes, sir," he says mechanically.

Barney notices the way the boy's voice has changed. It's metallic now, very cold and metallic, as if it were some kind of computer talking. They've done it well. He is barely human now . . . unable to resist . . . humiliated . . . publicly humiliated. Malcolm is the best at it, *the* best. Though he feels sick, though he wants to get the hell out of here so badly, Barney feels this strange bond with both the kid and Malcolm. It's as if they are all in this play together . . . it's only a game, isn't it. The kid is standing there open-mouthed, while behind him all his burgers are burning to a crisp, and Malcolm is smiling that Lee Marvin killer smile, and he's being stared at by all the dead fish customers, but only for a second. They have already forgotten about it and are masticating their burgers, grinding up the Wonder Bread and the dogmeat. They won't really do anything . . . the kid doesn't really care . . . he'll get another car . . . it's a play . . . just a play . . . you are watching yourself watching yourself watching yourself walking out the door.

"You take *our* car back," Malcolm says, tossing Barney the keys. "I'll take the punk's. Another Slug down the tubes."

Nobody human here. Nothing to worry about. Watching yourself watching yourself walking through a dream filled with "Slugs" and "Punks" and "Frozen Thick Shakes."

Barney starts the car and drives the glowing diamond miles back to the bank.

Stocking up the goods

"How did you get hold of all this stuff?" I ask Barney. "I mean, when the bank gets them back, don't the people have a chance to set things right?"

Barney shakes his head and fills his glass.

"Technically, you're right. The bank has to wait 21 days for the person to come up with the balance. But here's how it really works. Say you want a good TV set. Well, you go through the list of Delinquent Creditors. You find someone who was taken in by all the advertising, who is really poor and dumb and who can't possibly pay off the balance. After you get the set, you wait 21 days, and then you are legally bound to put the set up for Public Auction. Also, legally you are supposed to put up at least three public notices of this auction. Naturally, you post these little announcements in the most obscure places, then you have a friend go in and buy it for you. Or sometimes you just buy the damned thing yourself, at a ridiculously low price. By the way, the police are some of the biggest winners when it comes to this practice. Guys like Malcolm, who idolize the cops, always make sure they get to hear about what's being auctioned."

You can always tell when a really good Collector has someone squirming on the other end of the line

"What about the balance that the original buyer still owes?"

"Oh, that's the really horrible part. He's sued for the balance. Since he can't pay it all, his wages are garnished, and when his boss finds out about that, then he usually is on his way out of a job. I mean, he isn't fired every time, but it doesn't help his chances of ever getting promoted, does it?"

"What the hell?" I say. "Don't people ever protest this kind of treatment?"

Barney slowly shakes his head from side to side.

"Hardly ever. We can do just about anything and they don't make a peep."

The case of Mr. and Mrs. DiGangi

Malcolm and Barney are on their way to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bill DiGangi, of Newark, New York. Mr. and Mrs. DiGangi have made a House Loan from the bank for $3,000. At the time they made the application for the loan, Mr. DiGangi, an employed welder, said that he was going to use the money to restore their house—everything from a new home entertainment center (which Barney now owns) to new rugs, new dining room furniture and a new dresser for the bedroom. He is now two payments behind on his loan, and Barney knows that Mr. DiGangi has been laid off from his job for three weeks. Only four days ago, Barney and Mr. DiGangi had the following phone conversation:

"Hello."

"Hello, Mrs. DiGangi?"

"Yes."

"This is Mr. Matthews of the Bank Collection Agency. I'd like to speak to your husband, please."

"He's not in right now."

"Listen, Mrs. DiGangi, I don't want to hear any of that. You know how serious this call is, and I want to talk to him, NOW!"

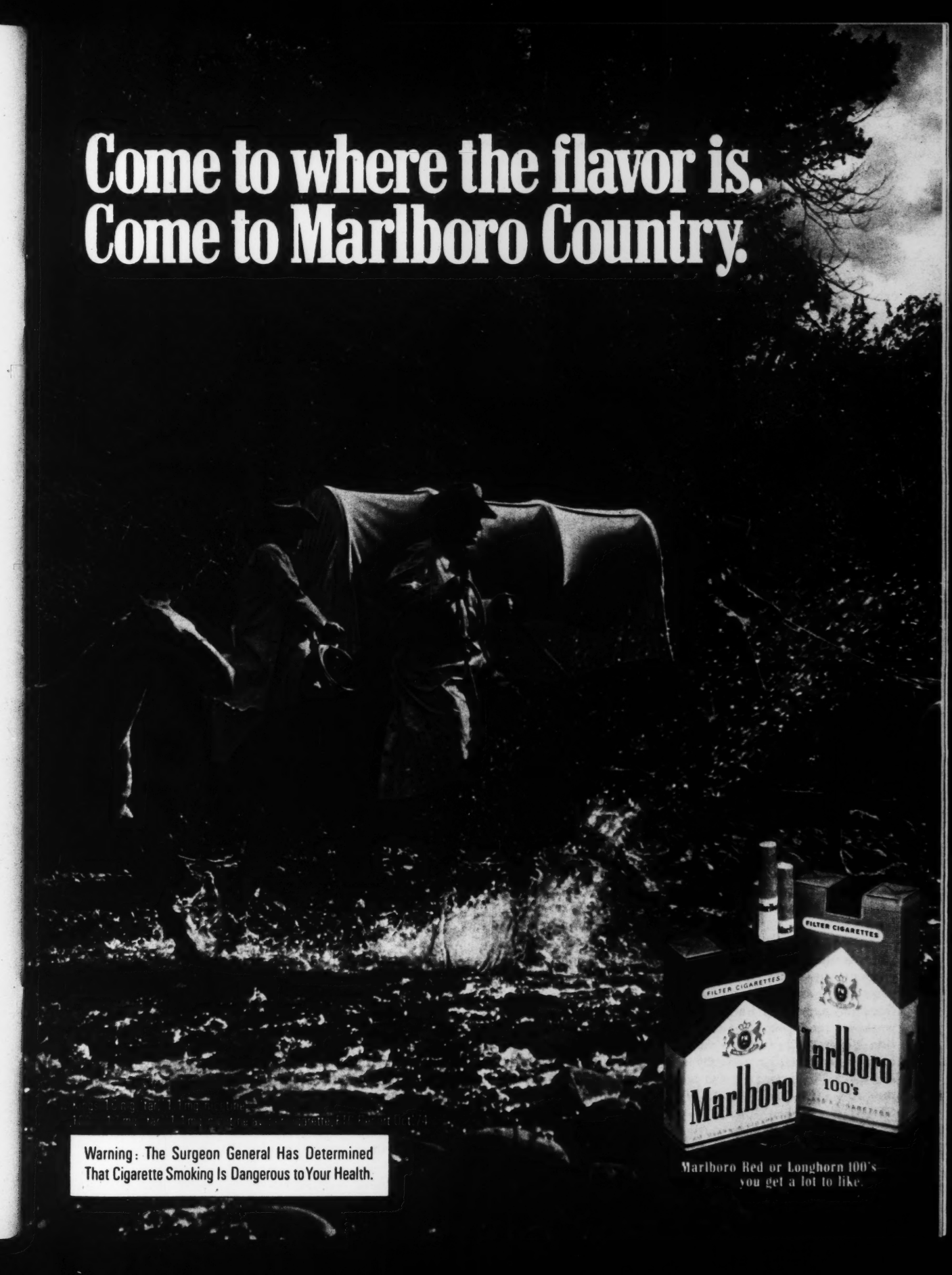
A voice comes from an extension phone. It's Mr. DiGangi. He's been on the phone all along.

Barney cradles the phone in his hand and starts to feel the adrenalin rushing through him. In spite of everything else he feels about his job, the sheer moral repugnance of it, he likes to hear them squirm. It makes his office seem charged . . . that's it, charged. You can always tell when a really good collector has someone squirming on the other end of the line. Oftentimes, Malcolm or Billy Schmidt will stop their paper work and look across the great neon abyss at him, sitting at his stainless steel desk, and they will watch him, and wink, and nod their heads, and slap their hands together like the black football players they idolize. (Only the football players. All the rest of those Slug niggers are dangerous. You never try to repossess a nigger Slug without a little Outside Help.)

"Mr. DiGangi, you are three payments behind on your House Loan. What seems to be the problem?"

Malcolm is nodding now, nodding and slapping five with Billy Schmidt. The neon lights shower down on their pink palms.

"That's the way you do it, Barney," Malcolm says. "Set them up first with that seemingly helpful, concerned tone, then lay it on."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"Well, Mr. Matthews, you know I was working for Piccione Brothers, but they laid me off . . . you know . . . I was out of work for a while, and I've just started again. I've got a check coming in next week. If you could just give me some time?"

Barney won't listen to that shit now. He starts to lay it on a bit harder.

"Well, exactly how long *were* you out of work? It's been two full months."

"Well, they laid me off. But now I'm working again. I'm going to have a check next week. I could send you a payment then. I *was* going to send it to you then. I've been out of work for three whole weeks."

Barney is not looking at Malcolm now. He wants to get into it. He *wants* to lay it on this Slug . . . trying to put it over on *him*.

"Three weeks. But you haven't payed for two whole months. What happened to the other five weeks Mr. DiGangi? What's your excuse for that? This account has been slow before, and we won't stand for it."

"I got three kids . . . you know, it was Christmas . . . I had to buy presents for the kids and stuff. Can't you wait a couple of weeks?"

"Christmas? You're using that one on me? You think I care whether it's Christmas or not. YOU THINK I'M SANTA CLAUS OR SOMETHING? I'll tell ya, I could have sympathized with the laying off part of it, but now that you've said *that* . . . obvious bullshit about Christmas. . . ."

Make him feel that he blew it. Make him feel that if only he hadn't been such a fool as to say the Christmas bit, things could have been different. Feel the blood coming up in your neck, your hands gripping the touch dial phone.

"Well, I was going to send you the payment next week. Anyway, you got no right yelling at me . . . no right. It *was* Christmas, and my kids. . . ."

The Bastard Has A Bad Attitude. Lay It On Him.

"Listen, wiseass, I'm going to tell you something. You are the one who has given up your rights. Now, I want to tell you what's going to happen. I want those three payments, and I want them next week. I want the envelope to say *Attention Mister Matthews,* and I want it right on my desk, and if it doesn't say it . . . if it doesn't, I'm coming out and taking all the stuff. ALL OF IT, YOU UNDERSTAND?"

There is a long silence.

"But Mr. Matthews, you can't expect me to make three payments when I just got back to work."

"Don't give me that. You've been behind before. You know the score. If all three of those payments aren't on my desk next week, then we're coming to take the stuff. That's the ball game!"

"But what will we eat?"

"I don't care what you eat. YOU CAN EAT CRAP AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED. I'm not falling for that starvation routine. You have one week, DiGangi. ONE WEEK OR IT ALL GOES! ALL OF IT!"

"But you can't expect. . . ."

Barney slams down the phone. Malcolm and Billy are screaming with laughter, slapping palms. It's a riot. Beautiful. Beautiful. Let the moron eat crap. What a line. Nothing like stomping those Slugs. A real rush!

Now, four days later, Malcolm and Barney pull in Mr. and Mrs. DiGangi's driveway. Barney has done his research well. He knows that both the DiGangis will be out. Mr. DiGangi is at his bowling league, and Mrs. DiGangi has her Cub Scout Meeting. He knows this from things Mr. DiGangi has dropped in past hassles. Another mark of a Good Collection Man: *Never Forget Anything, and Always Be Prepared To Use It Against The Slugs!*

"One guy actually got on his knees and begged us not to take his speedboat"

"Well," says Malcolm coolly, "I'll go in the window while you back the truck up. Let's get moving."

The Two Outside Help Goons jump from the back of the truck and follow Malcolm up to the front window. They push it open and go inside. Two minutes later, the front door opens and the family entertainment center is hauled out. Then comes the dinette. Then the beds, and finally the dresser. In the front room there is now a sofa and a goldfish in a bowl. He swims around hurriedly, frantically. Malcolm smiles at him as he slams the door.

The big truck rolls down the highway. Malcolm and Barney and the Outside Help start singing "He's About a Mover." It's been a good day's work. Very good. No more trouble from those Slugs. Next time they won't crack so wise. If they'd been a little humble to the Collection Boys, they might have even given the poor bastard a week extension. But once he opened his mouth, that was all she wrote.

The confessions of Barney Matthews

"I suppose you find it hard to believe. I know I don't really believe it myself. But that was my job, and at first I really kind of believed in it. I was very naive . . . and I was married, with two boys, and I wanted to advance. I hadn't finished college. So the bank said they had a job for me. I guess where you're coming from it sounds kind of naive, but at one time I really did believe in the bank. I mean, it seemed like a really big position of trust. I thought that the banks were the pillars of society. I believed all that stuff they taught . . . and so I collected for the first year with a vengeance. I know it sounds hard to believe . . . how callous I was. But I didn't really see the people in front of me. I remember one guy actually got on his knees and begged us not to take his speedboat . . . it was his pride and joy . . . but the boss at our branch had a habit of wanting a new speedboat every year. So every year it was our duty to go down and get him a new one, by repossessing one. He wouldn't buy it for himself, he'd buy it for the bank to resell. But instead of reselling it, he'd use it all summer and *then* resell it. He's still doing it right now. He lives on Keuka Lake, and he has a new boat every year . . . and some poor guy has been sued for the balance, has had his wages garnished and might even have been fired so that son of a bitch can go fishing."

"When did you first start to realize what you were doing was wrong?"

"I don't know. I was enjoying it, that's the truth. I started to wonder what was wrong with me. Why was I enjoying it? It wasn't a really enjoyable, happy thing. I mean, it was this kind of vicious sense of satisfaction. I began to have trouble with my marriage. The pressure at the Collection Agency was getting overwhelming. I guess I couldn't stand treating people like they were pigs anymore . . . it was getting so sadistic . . . and they were starting even dirtier tricks."

"Like what?"

"Well, they have a new service. The bank has this new service that's supposed to help the customers. That is, for 1 percent of your loan, you can postpone two months' payment. It's called a Payment Deferral. So if you owed $1,000, for $10 you could postpone the payment until your last payment. This helps people through Christmas and hard times, and it is supposed to be a good thing. But the same time that they started *that* procedure, the Collection Agency started a new procedure of its own. That is, say

you send in a payment a month late . . . you send in December's payment on January 5 . . . well, naturally you think that the payment will only go toward the interest you owe and won't touch the principal at all. So you get the loan extended even more. This is, of course, in clear violation of the banking laws. It's terrible, really terrible."

Barney Matthews shakes his head. He looks defeated and deeply disappointed with himself.

"Is there anything people can do?" I ask him.

Barney nods his head. That slow, professional nod. Underneath the humanistic concern, the Collector is trying to come out. Or is it the other way around? One hopes. . . .

"Yes, there are quite a few things. First, we are never allowed to go into anyone's house and take things . . . that's illegal . . . it's simply breaking and entering. If any Collector does that to you, call the police and have him arrested. Second of all, if a man comes to your door and tries to repossess something and says, as Malcolm used to say, 'Get out of the way, I'm coming in,' you have every right to demand that he leave. If he doesn't leave, that is legally harassment. Third, in New York and I think many other states, if a Collector talks to anyone else except the party who is legally responsible for the loan, then the Collector is harassing him. That means, even if the Collector calls your wife up and says, 'Listen, lady, your husband owes us such and such,' the Collector has committed harassment. If he comes to your door and hassles your wife and you've got a witness there, hire a lawyer. Another favorite ploy of the Collectors is to come to your door and demand the stuff, and when you say, 'Get off of my property,' they counter with, 'I'll be right back with the police.' This is totally a bluff. Legally, the police have no authority at all to help a Collector."

"What about the 21-day period before they turn your goods over for auction? Is that legal?"

Barney sighs and has another drink of wine.

"Unfortunately, that's legal. Most of the laws are still very much on the side of the bank. In most contracts there is a clause which says that if you are even one day late with a payment, they can reclaim the goods. Naturally, this isn't done to most middle-class people, but you'd be surprised how often it is done, especially to blacks. I remember the time when Malcolm went to the door of a black man and kept calling him Nig. When the guy put up a beef, Malcolm had the Outside Help lift his coat and reveal his gun. That quieted the guy down. Malcolm got a very big kick out of it. He talked about it at the office for months. The loan boys love that kind of stuff. Harassing a black is really their idea of a good time."

"Do you think that people will keep on taking this kind of treatment?"

"God, I don't know. They've taken it so far. I just think that they should know that they don't have to take it. When the loan boys call you up, tell them right away that you are aware of your rights. If they come to your house, you should throw them out. If they call you a name, get a lawyer. If your contract is unfair, you should demand that the contract be abolished. Maybe citizens should band together and get to the media and really expose the whole thing. People might be exhausted concerning Vietnam and things like that . . . I hope they aren't . . . but in a way I can understand that. It's been so long, and it's so far away. But this . . . this is something that's happening to us, right here, and it's something that's happening to more and more of us. People like Malcolm, like all those other bastards at the bank, have tremendous powers, but they can be stopped. That's the truth. If people just wouldn't sit there and take it, it could be the Collection Boys, instead of the rest of us, who get to feel the real crunch." ●

Michael Gross

Phonequake

For the 173,000 victims of the Ma Bell fire in New York City, life without phones was a disaster movie come true

By Edward Zuckerman

Forget earthquakes. Forget upside-down ocean liners. Forget towering infernos. A real disaster struck the Lower East Side of Manhattan last month, when a fire in a New York Telephone switching center knocked out 173,000 telephones in 104,000 homes and businesses, and they stayed knocked out for weeks.

Hollywood, no doubt, is already planning the movie. Call it *Phonequake* or *The Dialing Inferno*. Cast Charlton Heston as the dedicated phone repairman who is summoned to splice the crucial cable, Robert Redford and Paul Newman as partners in a flower shop whose business plummets because customers can't phone in orders (and Faye Dunaway as their girlfriend), Ernest Borgnine as a frustrated obscene phone caller, Robert Vaughn as a corrupt telephone company executive who commandeers precious equipment to run a line to his mistress's apartment, Sidney Poitier as a man standing in line at a pay phone and Liv Ullmann as Ma Bell. Finally, enhance the production with Sensedeprive, a special effect that simulates the ominous silence of 173,000 telephones not ringing.

But no movie would be complete without the participation of the actual New Yorkers who found themselves suddenly incommunicado. They are a heterogeneous group. (An emergency leaflet describing the location of temporary pay phones was printed in English, Spanish, Yiddish and Chinese.) And they reacted in the inimitable style of New York, where, to an outsider, normal everyday life looks like a disaster.

"The first thing I thought," said a writer who lives in Greenwich Village, "was I'm not going to pay my goddamn bill. What can they do to me? Turn off my phone?"

"At first I liked the adventure of looking for a pay phone," said a freelance cameraman, "but then I began to worry that I wasn't hearing about terrific parties."

"I can't even call my boyfriend no more," said a Puerto Rican teenager. "I got to meet him on the corner."

For some people, like businessmen, the effect was even more serious. To serve them, the phone company established a special message center, where, several days into the blackout, the following true scene took place:

(CUT to a phone company lounge that has been filled with 100 operators at long tables with 100 telephones.)

Bruce Rabuffo (a company executive, showing a visitor around): "You ever see the Jerry Lewis telethon? That's the phone number we're using here. It's a system we have set up permanently, so we just had to shift it over. These phones were available, but we had repairmen work all night to replace their bells with flashing lights. If they were ringing instead of flashing, we'd all go crazy. We're getting 5,000 calls a day. We had one from Japan this morning. From here we send the messages downtown, where they're hand-delivered by the Wildcat Service Corporation. That's a city-funded agency that employs ex-addicts and ex-convicts."

Ed O'Brien (another executive): "The very first call we got here was from some nut who went on and on about how telephone company executives are all drunkards and we're using drug addicts to deliver messages. We just had a call from a woman who left her keys in her car and wants her husband to go get them."

Operator (approaching Rabuffo): "Look at this message. What do you think we should do?"

(Rabuffo reads the message, which is addressed to a doctor. It's from a woman and it says, "Having cramps and bed bearing down. Please get in touch.")

Rabuffo: "My God! It'll be hours before this is delivered. Call the police."

Less urgent messages were carried downtown by a driver named George. The day the service began, George recalled, "in order to show the public what we were doing and how quick it was," some reporters wanted to follow him down. He picked up his hourly pile of messages and got in his car and then had to wait 10 minutes for a TV crew to pull their car up behind him. Then a radio reporter who wanted to interview George as he drove discovered that he was out of tape, so George, followed by the TV car, had to drive over to the radio station to pick up a cassette. While George's speedy progress was thus being recorded for public consumption, a couple of phone company executives were pressed into service to actually deliver the accumulating messages.

George acted faster a couple of days later when he had a message to Alcoholics Anonymous from a man who said he was depressed and contemplating suicide. George drove that one over to A.A. directly.

Routine messages, meanwhile, were dropped off and sorted by hand and delivered by Wildcat messengers on foot. One of them was Harrison Campbell, a tall 27-year-old black man who had been imprisoned for possession of heroin. In his black leather cap and black corduroy coat, he got a frosty reception as he walked into white-owned businesses. "It bothered me at first," he said, "but I most put it out of my head. If I'm gonna run back uptown every time a white person

Edward Zuckerman last reported for NEW TIMES *on the new gold speculators.*

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL GROSS

gives me a funny look, I might as well live in a hole. I'm glad we're getting a chance to help out, only it's hard on your feet, man. And they don't pay you nothing for wearing out your own shoes."

Once they realized what Campbell was doing, most people on his route received him pleasantly. But some businessmen found the service to be too little and too late.

(CUT to Herb Hershkowitz of the Alvin Cord and Trimming Co., in a factory loft on lower Broadway.)

Hershkowitz: "Look at this." (He points to a table littered with empty boxes, spools of thread and reels of brightly colored trim. There is nobody working there.) "This is my shipping area. It's dead. I'm not doing any shipping at all. Ninety percent of my business comes in over the telephone. Some guy will call from the garment center and say he needs a belt number in orange and gold with an orlon fringe, and he'll want it this afternoon. If he can't reach me, he'll call somebody else. My biggest competitor is two blocks out of the phone blackout area. Nobody has any sympathy. They're in business, too."

(He picks up a message he has just been handed by Harrison Campbell. It says he should call Fashion Lampshade.)

"Look here. Look at the time entry. This was called in at 10:45. I just got it and it's 3:30. If I was Fashion Lampshade, I would have given this order to somebody else by now. I have 52 employees here and I'm keeping them on, but it's very stupid of me. I'm building up stock, but I don't know who's going to pay for it."

Other serious consequences of the phone shutdown were suffered most severely by the elderly and the ill. "This is a disaster for these people," said Risa Schmuckler, a social worker in an agency serving elderly Jews. "When these people don't feel well, if they get a pain in the chest, they dial 911 and the police come. We've had clients who've fallen down and broken their hips, and it's taken hours, but they've crawled to the phone and called for help. With the phones out, we're doing more visiting than we usually do, and some of the project buildings have floor captains checking around. But you can't run to everyone all the time. The sister of one of our clients came to visit her and there was no answer at the door. The superintendent let her in and they found the woman dead. . . . This was a healthy woman. She was just in our Purim play. Whether she would still be alive if she could have used her phone we'll never know."

Some other area services were not affected by the shutdown. The New York City shelter for homeless men on the Bowery reported business as usual. And the high-crime 9th Precinct reported most crime steady and a 35 percent *drop* in burglaries, a decrease the police attributed to the extra uniformed men they had put on the street.

But, throughout the affected area, phonelessness wrought subtle but fundamental changes in social behavior. For one thing, the unwritten but ironclad rule of New York socializing that one never visits any but the most intimate friends without calling ahead was of necessity violated, and the city did not sink into the sea.

"I like it," said one phoneless woman who has two phones in her studio apartment. "It's like a Victorian novel. People come by and if I'm out they leave calling cards. The only drawback is that I have to keep my apartment reasonably clean."

A shopkeeper: "Let's just say that some people have coped with the situation very well. Let's say that some places...let's not say here...have strung their own phones..."

Phonelessness also brought out, to some extent, the fabled tendency of New Yorkers to draw together in times of crisis. "Usually nobody in my building talks to anybody else," one woman said. "Now when you get on the elevator, they say, 'So how do you like not having a telephone?' The conversation always ends there, but it's something."

Civility extended, for the most part, to the lines of people waiting to use emergency pay phones hurriedly rigged up by the phone company. There were, inevitably, exceptions:

(CUT to a pay phone on Sixth Avenue. The man in the booth looks like a hippie left over from 1967. He turns to the man in line behind him.)

Worn-out hippie: "You motherfucker! Can't you see I'm making a call?"

Man in line: "Okay, so make your call. I didn't say anything. Just don't call me a motherfucker."

Worn-out hippie: "You goddamn motherfucker! I'm gonna hit you in the face . . . ."

(The argument continues inconclusively, as no one knows what it is about.)

A few blocks away, an elderly woman in the lobby of the Fifth Avenue Hotel reports, "I just got back from the phone and there was an insane woman there. I was in the booth and she started banging on the door. I said, 'Just a minute, lady,' and she started banging her head on the sidewalk and screaming, 'My dime! My dime!' So I talked a little faster than I planned to."

Unlike the lady banging her head on the sidewalk, most phoneless New Yorkers did keep their cool. The Society for College and University Planning in Greenwich Village u ized a neighborhood resource by paying an unemployed playwright whose phone was working 50¢ a message to take calls. Editors at the *Jewish Daily Freiheit*, a left-wing Yiddish newspaper, who lost the use of their wire service machine along with their phones, made do by listening to radio and TV news and rewriting the New York *Times*. "And we used a lot of imagination," one editor said.

At least one New Yorker handled the crisis so well that he was reluctant to talk about it:

(CUT to a shopkeeper in the art gallery area of Soho.)

Shopkeeper: "Who sent you here? Look, I don't want to talk about the phones."

(He is assured that his anonymity will be preserved.)

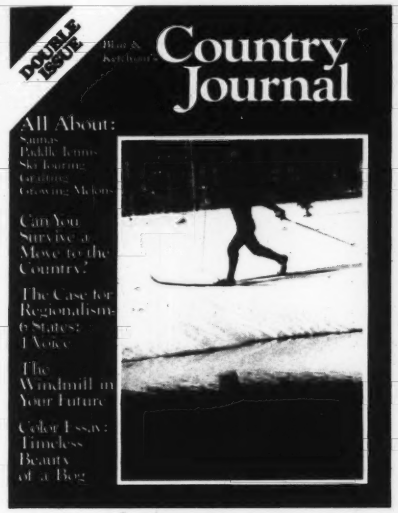
Shopkeeper: "Let's just say that some people have coped with the situation very well. Let's say that some places, let's not say *here*, let's say *some places*, have strung their phones. They've rigged up illegal extensions to working phones by using *very* long extension cords. I just don't want this getting back to the phone company."

Still others survived happily without restoring their phones and were, in fact, in no hurry to get them back.

(CUT to a young woman in the apartment she shares with her boyfriend.)

Young woman: "What I especially like about not having a phone is that when you start something. . . she smiles . . . you know you won't be interrupted . . . .

(FADE-OUT) ●



What we've done- in just 9 issues

Blair & Ketchum's Country Journal started publication last May in Brattleboro, Vermont. Conceived as a New England magazine, it has met with a great reception everywhere. "It should be read throughout our country," wrote one subscriber, "wherever people love the land and its history." It was founded by Bill Blair, formerly publisher of Harper's Magazine, and Dick Ketchum, formerly editor of American Heritage books, and it has high standards of literacy and design.

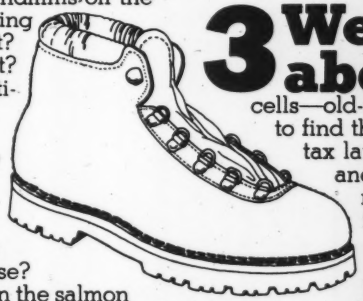
Here are some of the useful things you could have learned from our first nine issues:

1 We've told readers how to

raise trout—naturalize daffodils—cook on a wood stove—trench-plant tomatoes—manage a woodlot—get the best TV reception—care for hanging plants—raise pigs for the table in five months—go bicycle touring—make direct contact prints from leaves and flowers—raise sheep—dry apples—propagate flowering shrubs—cook fish—winterize a summer home—select a chainsaw—choose the best canoe—raise your own beef—plant to attract birds—fly kites—grow your own evergreen forest—recognize good country furniture.

2 We've dealt with these 21 questions (and others):

Can you pan for gold in Vermont's rivers? Should you plant a hornbeam in your yard? What can we learn from the one-room schoolhouse? Where have the deer gone? Should we build huge windmills off the coast? Which hiking boots are the best? What is a peasant? Should you investigate sun rights before buying property? Is there still hope for farming in New England? Should you put lightning rods on your house? on your trees? Can the salmon be brought back to the Connecticut River? Why and how do the leaves change color? Is wood now our most economical fuel? Why do men hunt? Would a sane tax system encourage better use of land? Would you want a job as a toll-bridge keeper? Where can New England find new energy sources? Should you invest in a race horse? What kind of fence should you build? Should you post your land? Can we bring back railroad service?

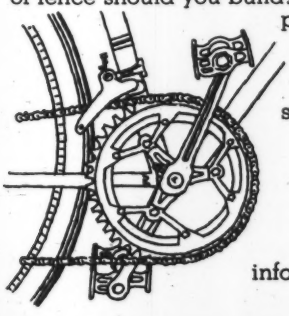


3 We've told about

swimming holes—fuel cells—old-fashioned apple varieties and where to find them—blueberries—a rural medicine plan that works—forest tax laws in the six New England states—wood-burning stoves and how they work—how not to build a pond—four ways to make compost—country fairs—fishing seasons in the six states—hiking trails—what kind of wood to burn—the best canoeing waters.

4 We've told where to find

canned fiddleheads—greenhouses—custom-fitted bicycles—cooperatives—handmade firearms—puffins—classes in belly dancing—the Society for the Propagation of the Johnnycake Tradition—a circus to hire—a smithy to repair carriage wheels—birchbark canoes—instruction in handling a team of horses—soapstone—the Uni-Bass—clothes for square dancing—a stained glass craftsman—cider presses—New England gemstones—information about hang gliding.



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Selma, Selma

Ten years ago, Selma, Alabama, became the symbol of die-hard white opposition to civil rights, and of the black determination to overcome. Today, the violence of Bloody Sunday seems part of a distant past—but the struggle goes quietly on

By Johnny Greene

The face of Selma is as simple today as it was on Sunday afternoon, March 21, 1965, when the Great March began. On weekdays white store owners and bankers still amble down sun-drenched streets, pause at corners to talk, crowd into the "Downtown" Restaurant and order the $1.80 noon meal of one meat, three vegetables, cornbread, rolls and iced tea.

Along Water Avenue, on the banks of the Alabama River, older blacks—farmhand style in overalls and faded denim—still congregate on storefront benches and talk in slow, soft drawls, while younger males, obviously stoned, weave down side streets and alleys, their liquor bottles wrapped in brown paper sacks. At the intersection of Highway 80 and Water Avenue, at the base of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, four-door sedans and pickup trucks with rear-window gun racks idle beside one another at the street light. At the opposite end of the bridge stand pizza parlors and snip-snap hamburger joints.

You could almost drive through Selma without giving the place a second thought. In many ways it is indistinguishable from a hundred other sleepy Southern towns. But Selma is unforgettable, the site of the last clean, distinct line in this country between right and wrong. A revolution was born here ten years ago, in a cold, slashing rain, over by the pizza parlors, while Sheriff Jim Clark's deputies terrorized children with electric cattle prods. The clear line was drawn on the Pettus Bridge at the exact spot where George Wallace's troopers beat down 650 marchers who wanted to cross the Alabama River and petition the Governor's Office in Montgomery for voting rights. The Spirit of Selma, the Revolution of 1965, was born in those beatings, and it moved a nation to action.

Time and progress have frayed that line around the edges, but in 1965 it was as sharp as the beat of jackboots on asphalt. It was no accident that first SNCC and then SCLC answered the calls of black Selma activists to launch massive voter registration drives in that wet, raw-boned Alabama winter; out of a potential black voting strength of 15,000, fewer than 300 blacks had been registered to vote in Dallas County. In Dallas and surrounding counties, the black population outnumbered the white population. For both sides, the meaning of the struggle was crystal clear: if the blacks got the vote, those in power realized, a system of dominance and submission a hundred years in the making would collapse within a decade. For them, surrender was unthinkable.

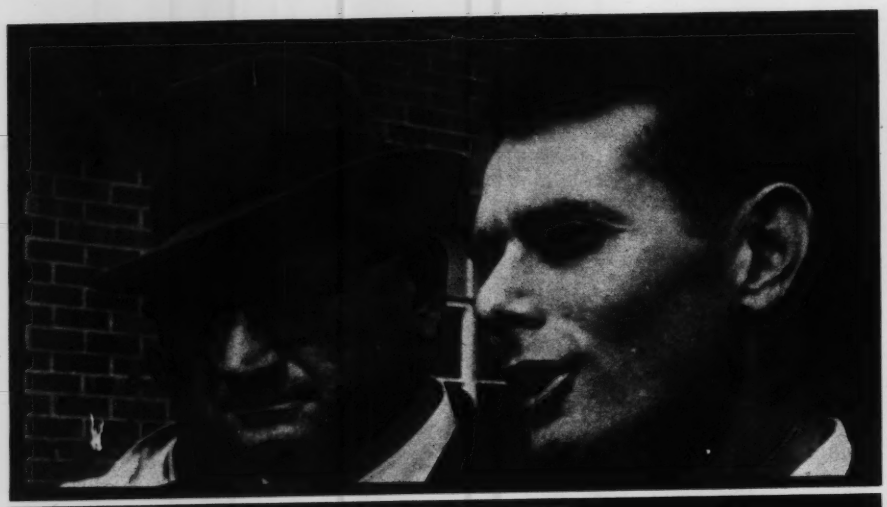
Voter registrars knew their duty. Prospective black voters were harassed and intimidated. White employers threatened to fire black employees if they tried to register. County law-enforcement officials surrounded registrars' offices and bullied blacks who showed up. And those few blacks who did get through, did get inside the courthouse to fill out applications, were required to interpret unintelligible sections of the Constitution of the State of Alabama and made to pass literacy tests. One of the most famous questions asked of black applicants was, "How many bubbles are in a bar of soap."

Local blacks had been fighting pitched battles against the system for years before the massive voter registration campaign—and its attendant national publicity—reached Selma. In 1963 Marie Foster, a dental hygienist, quietly began a registration drive of her own. She was a registered voter at the time, and new voters, by Alabama law, had to be "vouched for" by those who already had the vote. One day, Marie Foster vouched for 95 applicants.

"I was a nervous wreck afterwards," she says, sitting in her brother's dental office, remembering it. "It was slow, but we were making progress."

She takes out a spiral bound notebook. Beginning in January 1963, Mrs. Foster conducted voter registration classes, and in the notebook are the names of those attending and dates of the classes. Beside each name is a "P" or a "DP"—Passed or Didn't Pass. The DPs

VOTE



far outnumber the Ps.

"January 29, 1963," she recorded in the book, "one person showed up." Another entry reads, "Rained Out." Another, "March on Washington."

"I would really like for more of the young people to get registered to vote," she says. "It's so easy now—they will even fill out the application forms for you."

They left Brown's Chapel Church that morning in an orderly procession down Sylvan Street to Alabama Avenue. There, they turned onto Broad Street and climbed the steep grade of the Pettus Bridge. The troopers were waiting for them at the other side of the river.

John Lewis and Hosea Williams led the march that Sunday, and the line of marchers stretched behind them to the top of the bridge. Some of the marchers carried back packs and sleeping bags, intent on making the walk to Montgomery to speak with the governor about voting rights. But the governor of Alabama had different plans. Within five minutes after they reached the base of the bridge, the troopers stormed them with billy clubs, electric cattle prods and bullwhips. A mounted posse shrieked the Confederate Rebel yell as it charged.

Lewis and Williams were clubbed to the ground. Five or six rows back, Marie Foster and her friend Mrs. Boynton Phillips, who had been walking together in the march, were shoved down in the melee.

"They put their arms together and came at us like this," says Mrs. Foster. She lifts her foot in a kind of goosestep, shifts her weight, goose-steps again and again, across the room. "They charged us but we kept coming."

She stops in the middle of the room. Outside, the day is overcast and the room is filled with pastel grey light. "You know, I can still hear the hooves of those horses. They sound terrible. When they knocked us down, they were using profanity. *Get those damn nigger women up out of the highway. You better get up 'cause we're fixing to tear gas you.* They

After the Great March from Selma to Montgomery (bottom), and a decade's worth of change, civil rights celebrities like Coretta King, who in 1965 marched beside her husband (left center) in a powerful act of protest, now return to Selma (right center) only for commemorative marches. Mayor Joe Smitherman, who ten years ago (top left) banned demonstrations in the town, recently sat in a city car (top right) and watched the 10th anniversary march pass by.

rip-off

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MERRIAM-WEBSTER

SHOCKING!

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threw it on me and Mrs. Boynton. Then they refused to let the ambulances pick us up. I could see those young people just screaming and running. I could hear that gas just popping. When I did get up, my knees were burning. They put us in a van. We brought Mrs. Boynton on, came on down by the church. People were running. Troopers were running behind people. I was back to the church trying to help people. Thank the Lord I had the presence of mind to protect my eyes from that tear gas."

Mrs. Foster looks away. "Thank the Lord," she whispers, "thank the Lord."

She closes the notebook, the register of her own voting rights project. The last entry reads, "July 16—class closed."

"These young people," she says softly, still staring out the window. "If they only knew what we went through."

"You have to be a watchdog over the gains that you have made," says Frederick Reese, assistant principal at Eastside Junior High School and Selma city councilman. "We're better off now than we were ten years ago. At least we're treated as human beings now and judged on our abilities. They don't call us *Boy* anymore or *Uncle* or *Auntie* like they used to do."

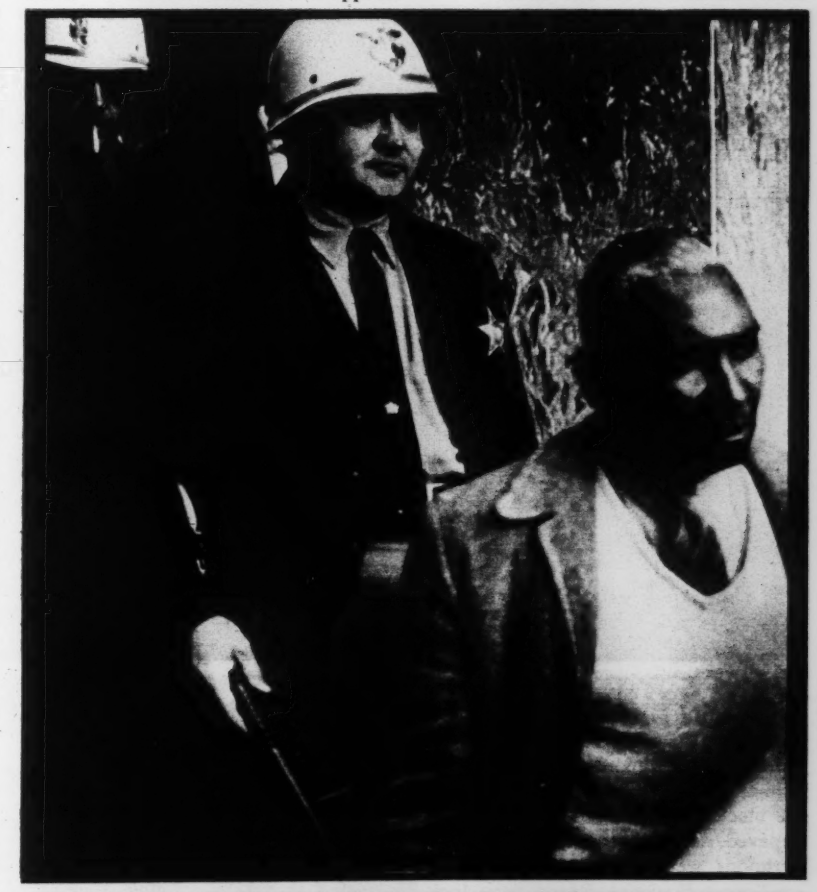
Ten years ago, Reese's life was threatened and so was his family. He lost his schoolteaching job, too, during the voter registration drive of 1965.

Reese's election—and the election of four other blacks to the Selma City Council—was a long time coming. After the passage of the sweeping Voting Rights Act of 1965, thousands of blacks registered to vote in Selma and Dallas County. Their first triumph was the overthrow of Sheriff Jim Clark, the symbol of white supremacy in Selma. But it was only after Selma was districted into wards—giving heavily black populated areas the chance to elect one of their own—that Reese and his fellow black councilmen moved into power.

"After the election of black councilmen," Reese says, "blacks were hired as clerks, cashiers in stores, were put on the police force, made heads of OEO projects, city department heads, put in managerial positions. The secretary at the fire department now is black."

Black and white students pop in and out of Reese's office, asking advice, guidance. The phone rings constantly. In the waiting room a white petitioner to the Selma City Council waits with a rolled up blueprint in his hand. A representative of the West Central Alabama Rehabilitation Center, the petitioner will ask the council to donate $16,000 to the center for its expansion program. But before facing the council, he visits Reese. Reese will favor the donation—91 clients are served at the center, 67 of them black. And Reese will seriously and earnestly question the petitioner—as he does each one who appears before the council—because he realizes that ten years ago, even five years ago, no white petitioner to the Selma City Council would have sought out even the unofficial support of a black Selma leader.

Reese also sits as chairman of the



Sheriff Jim Clark (top) wore a button that said "NEVER." Today, there are black cops on the Selma force.

The troopers' attack on the Pettus Bridge: "You better get up, nigger woman, 'cause we're fixing to gas you."

council's Streets and Lighting Committee, a position of enormous importance in Selma; in 1965 the majority of streets in the black neighborhoods of Selma were unpaved, and most streets in black neighborhoods were unlit. "When you feel low," says Frederick Reese, "you look around and see what we have done."

Ten years ago, on that bloody Sunday afternoon, Reese stood on the Pettus Bridge, and he was beaten and gassed. After he staggered back to Brown's Chapel Church, along with the other marchers, he was the first to stand up and speak, to lead a prayer and read scripture. About him in the church, the bloodied victims of what was to have been a nonviolent march lay on the pews.

"I've never seen so much hatred," he remembers. "There was disgust, disbelief, disillusionment. There were faces in front of me which held great questions, and what I asked myself was whether or not nonviolence could hold the situation."

After Reese spoke to the marchers, SNCC leader John Lewis, who'd been clubbed and was bristling with anger, rose to speak.

"I don't see how President Johnson can send troops to Vietnam," said Lewis. "I don't see how he can send troops to the Congo. And yet, he can't send troops to Selma, Alabama."

Selma, Selma: the call went out. In Atlanta Martin Luther King Jr. announced that he and Ralph Abernathy would return to Selma to lead another march across the bridge within 48 hours. As the nation's television and newspapers depicted the horror of the events of Bloody Sunday, the Coalition of Conscience that King had so painstakingly built throughout his career moved to join him at the bridge. Their cause had perhaps never been so clearly defined, the sides of right and wrong so obvious. For the next three weeks, as the press poured into Selma to cover the second march, the image of Selma became fixed, frozen forever, as much a part of subsequent American history as Valley Forge and Gettysburg.

Marie Foster leaves the dentist's waiting room and darts through a door. She returns with an orange vest, waving it like a flag.

"Just look at these names," she says, spreading the vest over a table.

John Lewis. Juanita Abernathy. Ralph Bunche. Bernard Lafayette. Rosa Parks. Mahalia Jackson. Jesse Jackson. Shirley Chisholm.

Mrs. Foster and the others who marched the entire 54 miles to Montgomery were given the vests on the last day, as 30,000 marchers and civil rights activists and Dr. King's Coalition of Conscience stood in front of the Alabama State Capitol, triumphant.

"It rained every day that we walked, and I thought that last day the clouds would burst—my clothes were soaking wet. We had a blind man to walk every step of the way. It was the most wonderful experience. People came from everywhere to help us. My knees swole up, but I padded my knees and I went on and I walked. I would pray all night—*God give me the strength to walk tomorrow.*"

When the Great March ended, Marie Foster asked her fellow marchers—as many as she could—to sign her vest. And now, as she sits in the waiting room, she holds it lovingly in her lap.

But things have changed only so much in Selma. For 11 bitter years, the town's blacks have petitioned and bargained and petitioned again to have the

City Council reopen the public swimming pool, closed after the 1964 Civil Rights Act decreed that it had to be open to blacks. The answer, year after year, has been the same as Jim Clark's and George Wallace's at the Pettus Bridge—"Never!"

Racism in Selma runs deep, is pervasive. Whites, who constantly jump to the defensive over 1965, still frustrate ongoing progress, either through cold, willful indifference or through open hostility to black aspirations. One of the most articulate of the young, rising white generation of Selma will say of the swimming pool, "My son will never swim there, and we don't want black children walking across the country club golf course to the old one they've reopened, either."

The tenth anniversary of Bloody Sunday. In the rear of Brown's Chapel Church, where it all began, a full choir, done up in bright red, is singing. The church is packed. Young black men and women cram together in the three small balconies high above the chancel, 4- and 5-year-olds dangle arms and legs over the balcony railings, pointing into the crowd in the pews below, waving to friends. Every seat on every pew is taken. Folding chairs are brought in. People stand three and four deep against the walls. On a front pew, in bright orange vests, sit Marie Foster and "Sunshine" Owens, a one-legged black man famous for having made the march to Montgomery on crutches.

No more than a dozen white faces dot the congregation. In seats near the pulpit Coretta King and John Lewis—wearing his orange vest—acknowledge continuing applause. The choir belts out

A famous question asked blacks by voting registrars before '65 was, "How many bubbles are in a bar of soap?"

songs that take everyone back, take some in the audience—older black men and women holding their faces and postures rigid at first and then giving up—to tears.

Strangely, that special song—once an anthem, but in these jaded times relegated by most of us to the history books—takes on renewed meaning in this setting: "Deep in my heart," they sing, "I do believe, we shall overcome someday." And as they join hands and sway together, the tears roll down their cheeks.

When the singing stops, Frederick Reese rises to the pulpit, above the small plaque that reads:

IN MEMORIAM

Jonathan M. Daniels
Jimmy Lee Jackson
James J. Reeb
Martyrs for Racial Justice
1965

Reese looks out over the crowd. "To all you freedom fighters, as I stand here tonight it reminds me of 1965 when I looked in the faces of those who had a burning desire to be free. But it doesn't matter how far we've come. It only makes me realize how far we have to go."

He raises his voice and reaches an outstretched arm to the young blacks who stare down at him from upstairs. "Many people made great sacrifices for you to be here today. People in Selma, Alabama, helped to make people free all over the world." He pauses and surveys the faces of those in the balcony. "Where are you today?" ●

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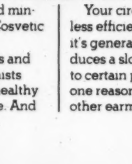

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Photo of healthy hair shaft.

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MOVIES

Musical skeletons

By Frank Rich

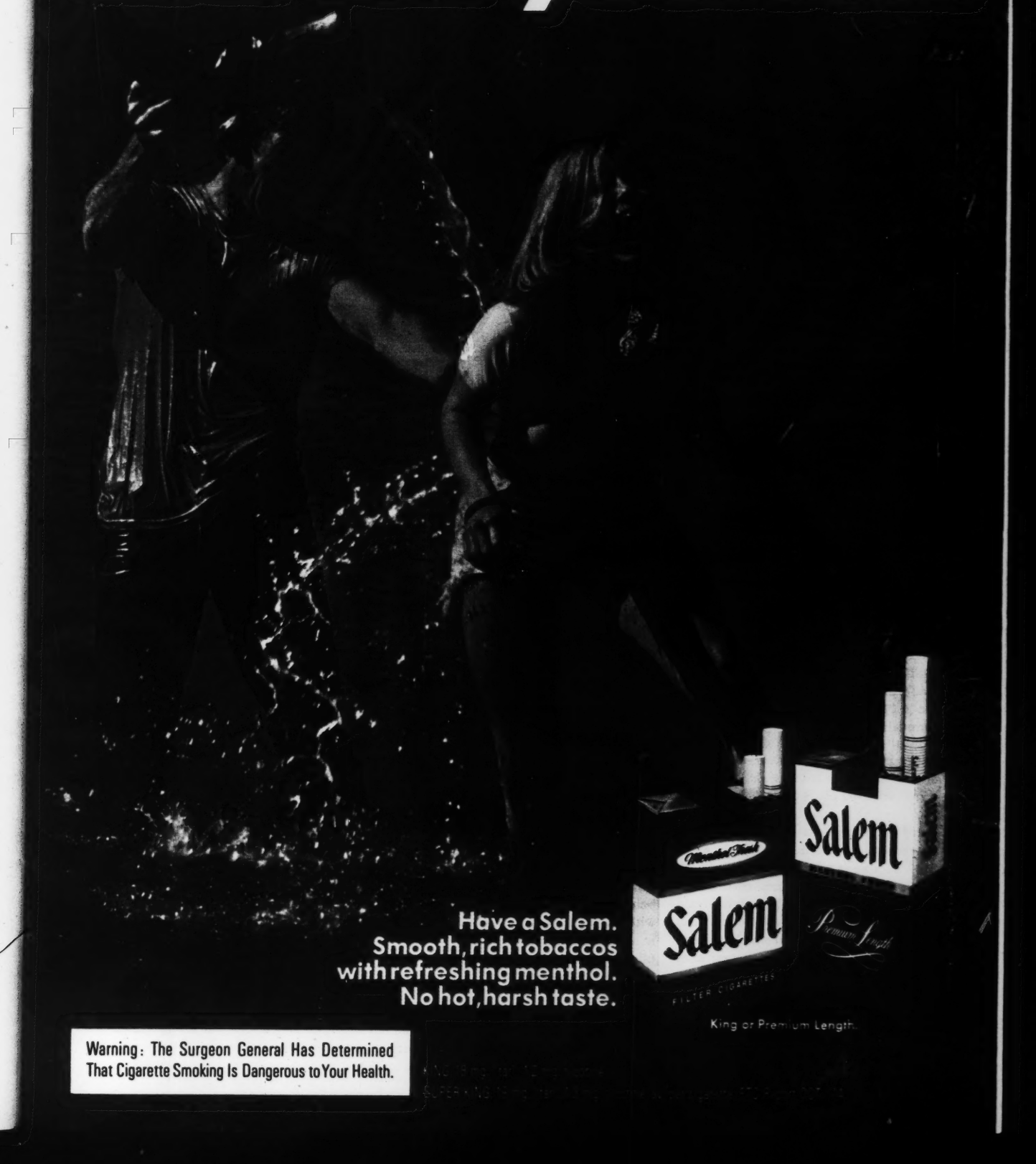
To keep the faith in the American movie musical these days requires an optimism so cockeyed that it might give even Mary Martin a certain amount of pause. Ever since the phenomenal and uncalled-for box-office success of Robert Wise's *The Sound of Music* in 1965, Hollywood has entertained the false hope that there's still room in commerce and art for the brontosaurus-like musical; even such legendary post-*Music* disasters as *Star!, Doctor Dolittle, Hello, Dolly!, Camelot* and *Lost Horizon* have failed to halt the parade of song-and-dance clodhoppers—they've just slowed it down a little. In the past year we've had two particularly primeval clinkers, one a film original *(The Little Prince)*, the other a Broadway adaptation *(Mame)*; and neither of these movies, like their antecedents, ever stood a chance, because they were both traditional book musicals—musicals in which characters burst into sudden song to expedite a plot or to let us in on whatever gooey sentiments happen to be racing through their telltale hearts. Back in the 1940s, when it was introduced on Broadway by Rodgers and Hart *(Pal Joey)* and Rodgers and Hammerstein *(Oklahoma!)*, the book musical was considered a revolutionary idea, but, as the theater learned in the 1960s, yesterday's revolution can become today's albatross. Broadway had to find a solution to the dilemma in order to survive, and so it did: thanks to the tireless efforts of director-choreographer Jerome Robbins and his spiritual heir, director-producer Hal Prince, a new form has been developed to take the place of the old; the best stage musicals now are the so-called conceptual ones, which use songs to comment upon the action of a drama rather than to advance it. It's no coincidence that the only movie musical worth talking about during the past decade has been *Cabaret*, and what made that picture worthwhile, whatever its other failings, was director Bob Fosse's success at translating Prince's conceptual staging of the original Broadway show into cinematic terms. *Cabaret* made money and won Oscars, and you'd think that an industry that knows nothing if not how to repeat itself might have made an effort to figure out why *Cabaret* was a smash and then put the lessons to work. But if the two big and expensive movie musicals of the moment, Herbert Ross' **Funny Lady** and Peter Bogdanovich's **At Long Last Love**, are any indication, *Cabaret* is destined to remain a fabulous fluke. These new films may not be old-fashioned musicals of the Rodgers era, with lusty baritones informing us that poor Jud is dead or singing waiters welcoming Dolly back to where she belongs, but they're not new-fashioned musicals, either. They're just comedies with songs thrown in—musicals in limbo, non-musical musicals, musicals that are going nowhere.

Del Prete, Shepherd, Reynolds, Kahn and goons in Bogdanovich's *At Long Last Love*: no talking, no singing, no dancing.

The amazing thing about musical comedies is that they either have it or they don't, and when they have it, there's no way an audience can fail to notice: suddenly the seams that bind together such diverse elements as music, story, character and dance disappear, and the show takes off through the roof, in hearty defiance of both gravity and common sense. What makes bad musicals so distasteful is not only the tedium they necessarily generate but the way in which they constantly call attention to the conventions of this indigenously American brand of entertainment. You can't enjoy magic if you know the secrets of all the tricks, and the bad musicals injure the magic of the good ones by reminding us at every turn of the absurdities that are at any musical's heart. While I find it hard to get too mad at *Funny Lady*, a musical that fails because of clumsiness and lack of inspiration (and doesn't fail completely, in that it gives Barbra Streisand and James Caan a few opportunities to beguile us), the Bogdanovich film drives me up a wall because it heaps abuse on the form by intent: it exposes the seams of musical comedy for no other reason than to show us the seams, and in that way it seems the most perverse movie musical ever made. Though *At Long Last Love* comes on as an affectionate send-up of the fluffy romantic musicals of the '30s, almost everything about the picture exudes contempt—both for musicals and those audiences that love them. The movie looks like a colossal, over-extravagant in-joke, but the point of its humor is so elusive and smug that one suspects that some of the film's performers haven't been clued in as to what the gag is; God knows what outsiders, the paying customers, will make of it all.

The motivation for *At Long Last Love*, of course, has to do with its director's continuing fascination with the great films of Hollywood's yesteryear. Having little to say of his own, Bogdanovich likes to regurgitate the work of the all-time greats and not-so-greats, as if an almost clinical recreation of celebrated movie bits and camera angles from the past will by some miracle make us believe that he shares the sensibility of a Howard Hawks *(What's Up, Doc?)* or a

Refresh yourself.



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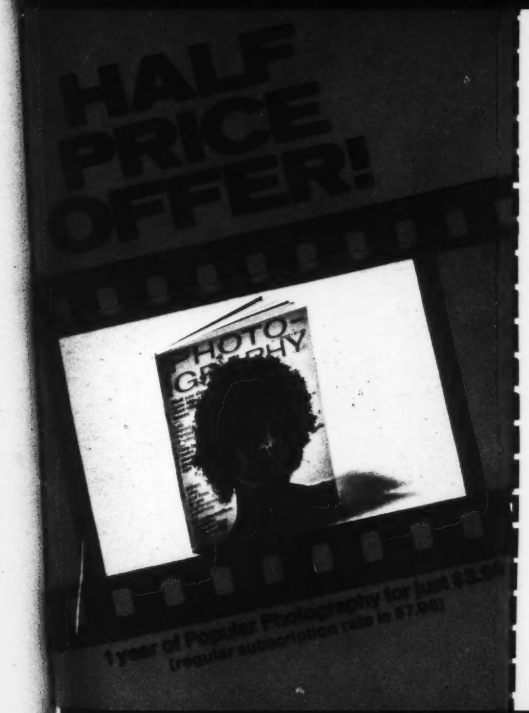
Frank Capra *(Paper Moon)* or an Orson Welles *(Daisy Miller)*. Like the rest of Bogdanovich's recent pictures, *At Long Last Love* stands in relation to the movies it parrots as a paint-by-numbers canvas relates to the work of art it aspires to duplicate—it's flat and chilly and occasionally a tad grotesque. But *At Long Last Love* goes even a step further than other Bogdanovich pastiches, for, besides failing to capture the substance and charm of the musicals it seeks to emulate, it doesn't successfully deliver the form's most superficial basics. The black-and-white Art Deco sound-stage sets are all there (though photographed in color—a pointless effect that recalls the sterile feel of such recent sci-fi, color black-and-white movies as George Lucas' *THX 1138* and Mike Hodges' *The Terminal Man*), but the people who sing and dance around the icy glitter are neither singers nor dancers; if a movie musical can't fulfill even that basic casting requirement, how can anything else fall into place? Bogdanovich has spared no effort in digging out obscure Cole Porter ditties that his cast can perform along with the standards, and he presents each number in complete versions (from the infrequently sung intros down through each extant verse), but every time his stars open their mouths or shake their legs, they trample on Porter's grave. Male star Burt Reynolds at least has an amusing talent for suggesting that he holds his musical talent and the movie itself in as low esteem as we do, and Eileen Brennan (as a wisecracking lady's maid) has a Broadway belter's training that saves her from humiliation, but the rest—oh my God! Duilio Del Prete (in the second male lead), an Italian with no voice, makes the elegant English of a Porter lyric sound like pig Latin; Madeline Kahn's contralto wavers between two registers (often in the same number), and, when all else fails, she tries to pass her awkward crooning off as camp. (The movie, too, tries to squeak by as camp—but is there anything less effervescent than heterosexuals playing at being gay?) Still, no one is a patch on Cybill Shepherd, Bogdanovich's very own Susan Alexander Kane, who here provides a performance identical to the one she gave in *Daisy Miller* and which is just as out of place in a musical context as it was within the thickets of that bowdlerized Jamesian fable. When Shepherd throws away a lyric or a line, she really throws it away—and her singing voice, which is as sing-songy as her speaking voice, causes one to yearn for the days when Marni Nixon dubbed in the songs of every tone-deaf Hollywood leading lady. For what it's worth, Shepherd does generate a few unintentional guffaws, especially when she takes a fatal stab at an Ella Fitzgerald-like riff on the word "slumber" in "Let's Misbehave" and when she grapples pathetically with the inflections of a Mae West one-liner ("Goodness had nothing to do with it") that I had always thought to be one of the absolutely foolproof punch lines in the language. As for Shepherd's dancing, the best to be said is that it may not be recognizable as such: when this horsy ex-model starts prancing around, she tends to look as if she's fighting off a chronic case of the trots.

Caan and Streisand in Ross' *Funny Lady*: under a pall.

I don't think Shepherd's career, if that's the word for it, will survive *At Long Last Love*, and, if there were any justice in this world, Bogdanovich's wouldn't either. The blame for this film, like the blame for *Daisy Miller*, cannot be nailed exclusively or even primarily on Shepherd's hide; it was Bogdanovich, after all, who cast her, and while it simplifies matters to think that he did so out of a love-induced blindness, the truth is that his choice of female star is of a piece with the other crucial aesthetic choices that have gone into these films. If Cybill Shepherd didn't exist, Bogdanovich would have had to invent her; Shepherd is the perfect Bogdanovich actress, for, like her mentor, she gives us mechanical gestures acquired exclusively from movies, rather than from life, in the vain hope that we'll think there's some real flesh and blood behind the gloss. As the star affronts us with garbled movie-queen mannerisms in *At Long Last Love*, so the director plies us with lovable old genre cliches—sudden Hollywood rains, characters with names like Michael Oliver Pritchard III and Johnny Spanish, telegrams announcing the last-minute arrival of an inheritance, an Eric Blore-like manservant (John Hillerman), jokes about "Little Orphan Annie"—but they're not lovable in these circumstances because Bogdanovich has no real respect for these anachronisms and no feeling for the spirit that was originally behind them. It's one thing to discover that this filmmaker doesn't know how to read Henry James, but to realize that he is equally incapable of grasping the simpler joys of musical comedy borders on the shocking. The same literal-mindedness that led Bogdanovich last year to turn Daisy into a spineless prattler and Winterbourne into a cardboard snotnose turns up this time to crucify the easily accessible pleasures of a Cole Porter verse. If a lyric has a reference to a bottle of Bromo Seltzer, you can bet that the director is going to throw a bottle of Bromo Seltzer on the screen; a tongue-in-cheek Porter number called "Find Me a Primitive Man" turns into a theatrical turn for Kahn in which she is surrounded by a chorus of primitive men (hasn't anyone told Bogdanovich that you can't spoof a spoof?); when Cybill does it to "I Get a Kick Out of You," she actually sees her lover's "fabulous face" in a newspaper and is surrounded by Dom Perignon bottles that prove she gets no kick from champagne. Throughout the film, the director works feverishly to send Porter's airy sentiments crashing down to earth—and, as it turns out, the simplest dynamics of musical staging escape him as well. The film has no big production numbers (in fact no billed choreographer), and when the leads break into song and dance at a nightclub or at a cotillion, the extras just stand there like goons, staring off into space; it's like watching a musical unfold within *The Night of the Living Dead*. Even when the director gives one of Porter's juiciest double-entendre songs ("But in the Morning, No") to two performers who can handle it (Hillerman and Brennan), none of the lyrics gets a laugh because the director is so busy moving the performers through a Deco mansion and having them do visual shtick that he obliterates the often delicate sexual undercurrents of the words we're hearing. Not that the non-musical sequences are any better: Bogdanovich sets up his trio of mismatched couples with the same pedantic cross-cutting by which he feebly attempted to set up the dilemma of the look-alike valises at the outset of *What's Up, Doc?*; to get the principals paired off at the end, the director employs a sleight-of-hand so slight that, by comparison, the conclusion of an Astaire-Rogers musical could pass for so-



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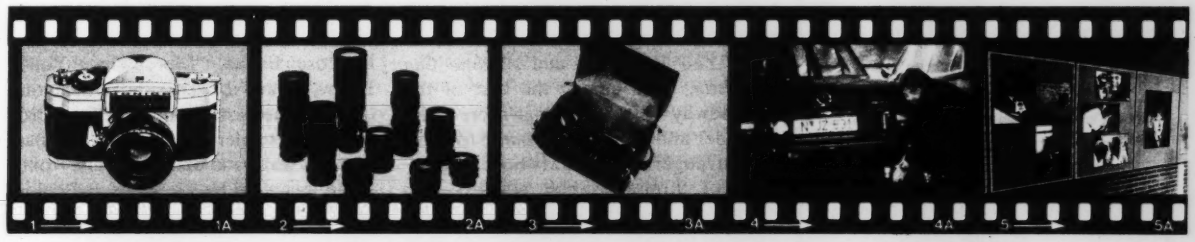

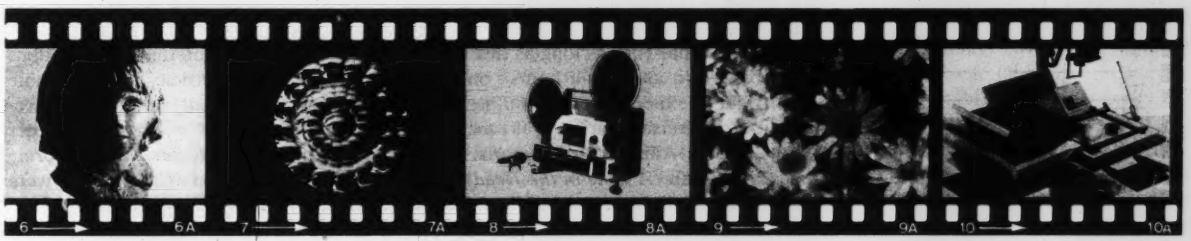

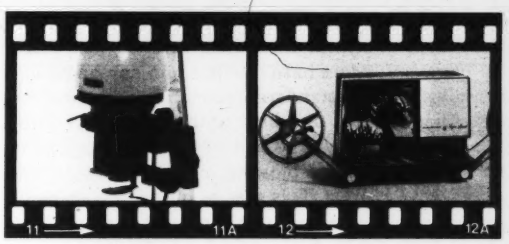

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cialist realism.

One expects better from *Funny Lady*, a sequel to *Funny Girl*, if only because there are top-notch talents involved at all the important creative levels, from co-screenwriter Jay Presson Allen (who performed the same chore for *Cabaret*) to director-choreographer Herbert Ross (whose ballets for two neglected stage musicals, *I Can Get It For You Wholesale* and *Anyone Can Whistle*, were among the best of the Broadway '60s) to songwriters John Kander and Fred Ebb (*Cabaret*) to musical arranger Peter Matz (who did a number of Streisand's best albums). The trouble is that the idea for the project proves to be a bummer and that, even within its confines, the film's creators haven't pulled out all the stops. In a movie that runs as long as this one (almost two and a half hours), one has a right to expect a story or, failing that, as many Streisand numbers as time allows. Instead, Allen and co-scenarist Arnold Schulman *(A Hole in the Head)* extend a fictionalized account of Fanny Brice's extraordinarily routine marriage to Billy Rose (Caan) well beyond its natural limits and pad out many of the blank spaces with loud, overproduced spectacles from Rose's Broadway extravaganzas and aimless chatter between and about minor characters (Brice's daughter, her male secretary, her friend Bernie Baruch) who have no legitimate narrative function. Since the authors have taken liberties with the true-life Brice story anyway (Billy Rose looked more like George Jessel than Caan), they might as well have gone whole-hog and cooked up some truly dishy theatrics; but the only drama that turns up is the reappearance of Fanny's first husband, Nicky Arnstein, and with Nicky must come the forever gaga- and glassy-eyed actor who almost wrecked the original Brice saga, Omar Sharif. Sharif's slobbering smile and oh-so-suave voice are as cloying as ever, and when he says lines like "You look ravishing, old girl" and "You're still the same old Fanny," the movie makes its most successful bids at boffo humor—despite the screenwriters' attempts to milk laughs out of a running gag about celery tonic, a slapstick sequence involving a buffalo (didn't we have the same thing with cattle in *For Pete's Sake*?) and the usual assortment of Streisand-tailored Yiddishisms.

Of course *Funny Girl* didn't have a great script either—it was impossible to give a damn about Arnstein no matter who played him—but that didn't make a difference after a while: Streisand rode roughshod over everything with those smashing Jule Styne-Bob Merrill songs. Once the strains of "People" turn up as background scoring during a scene in *Funny Lady*, it's impossible to wipe out our memories of *Funny Girl*'s score, and that casts a pall over all that follows. The best number that Streisand has in the new picture is a Billy Rose ballad, "More Than You'll Know," that she sings in a delicious (though needlessly abbreviated) recording-studio sequence early on. After that, one just waits and waits and waits—only to be assaulted by strenuous and colorless songs that paraphrase, in staging and content, *Funny Girl*'s "Don't Rain on My Parade" and *Gypsy*'s "Rose's Turn" (also a Styne creation). The hand-me-down nature of the material dims the Streisand electricity a considerable amount, and it all seems so unnecessary. Kander is a better composer than this score indicates; his "Coloring Book" and "I Don't Care Much" were standout Streisand tracks way back when, and even his lesser Broadway efforts *(The Happy Time, Flora the Red Menace)* show more harmonic originality than anything that we hear here. Matz hasn't helped him any by providing standard razzmatazz orchestrations that owe little to the '30s period of the story, and Ebb's lyrics, which speak of bugles blowing, cymbals crashing and great days that lie ahead, are shameful coming from the man who once wrote a song for Joel Grey that rhymed wittily in three languages.

Caan is as much at ease with himself as any male actor who's ever had to share the screen with Streisand, and yet, except for one half-song that he does with promising spunk near the picture's outset, *Funny Lady* never makes musical use of him. But then *Funny Lady* doesn't make all that much musical use of its music either: Ross brings the film his penchant for choppy editing (à la *The Last of Sheila*) and paradoxically fails to bring it his skills as a choreographer—neither the dancers nor the camera moves with the fluidity that might paper over some of the property's gaping holes. The show-biz settings (the fabled New Amsterdam Theater, a smoky New York *boîte*, a network radio studio) count for something, and so does the crystalline James Wong Howe cinematography that captures them in all their vibrant hues, but as soon as it becomes necessary to talk about musicals in terms of their components, the game is up. A musical can't be sublime

if its bones are showing, and if *Funny Lady* is less ridiculous than *At Long Last Love*, it's only because sheer mediocrity has a slight philosophical edge over utter garbage.

Even on his own terms, which are those of bourgeois Broadway farce, Neil Simon has been striking out lately, and the reason for his decline is not, I think, that audiences have outgrown this writer's particular brand of snappy commercial comedy. Simon just isn't writing that kind of comedy anymore. Beginning with *Plaza Suite*, the first act of which was a thoughtful (and creditable) bittersweet playlet about the disintegration of a marriage, this playwright started hearing how Serious he is—and he's been slugging us with Seriousness ever since. In recent years Simon has given us a morose drama about a Garland-like has-been singer (*The Gingerbread Lady*), a Chekhov adaptation (*The Good Doctor*), a slim and abrasive *Odd Couple* rehash about two aged and feuding vaudevillians (*The Sunshine Boys*) and, this Broadway season, a tasteless, modern-dress reworking of the story of Job (*God's Favorite*). If I were Simon, I'd be far more ashamed of these later efforts than of an honest and amusing souffle like *Barefoot in the Park*. Maybe he can't be blamed for wanting to be thought of as a significant as well as a wealthy dramatist, but the more he lusts after literary respect, the worse he writes. It's been a long time since Simon has come up with an entertainment that boasts even the conventional virtues of the "well-made" American play: his sense of timing and dramatic construction has gone out the window with his sense of humor.

Of all Simon's recent work, his most successful comedy by far, both with the public and as a piece of theater, is **The Prisoner of Second Avenue**—which director Melvin Frank has now brought to the screen, using a screenplay by Simon himself. *Prisoner* achieves stature only when compared to the author's subsequent plays, however, and the movie version, which "opens up" the action in that same creaky, flat-footed manner that has blighted all Simon film adaptations, accentuates the property's flaws. But even if one leaves aside *Prisoner*'s structural frailty, one still cannot excuse the play's heavy dose of Simon's latent sobriety: this is a comedy about a nervous breakdown, and the breakdown is played for easy laughs. Although I don't believe that Simon actually wants us to laugh *at* Harry Edison (Jack Lemmon), a newly fired Madison Avenue exec who finds himself "unraveling," he makes it impossible for us to feel anything for him. The causes of Harry's breakdown have less to do with his psychological makeup than with the unpleasantries of urban life; he's a prisoner of Second Avenue rather than of any personal demons and thus a catalyst for familiar gags rather than a potential source of credible human drama.

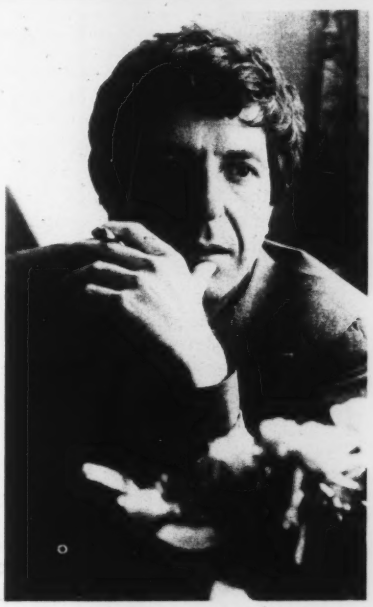
Lemmon does work hard as hell to keep the zingers afloat (although once he starts to play housewife, he slips into the maniacally fastidious mannerisms of his *Odd Couple* role), and so does the eternally enchanting Anne Bancroft as his wife (although she's visibly uncomfortable with the script's Jewish inflections). Frank has slapped it all together in his usual clunky style (there are lots of shots of talking heads framed against blank, shadowy walls), but what do you do with a writer who's so busy thinking big thoughts badly that he can no longer think even small thoughts well?

MUSIC

Exploring obsessive romanticism

By Janet Maslin

Most pop music is about romance, and many pop love songs are about romantic failure. Yet while men and women have traditionally been equally free to bewail the blight of a broken heart, the masculine stance has a way of appearing tougher than the feminine. Contemporary male singers don't usually gloss over such matters with the blitheness of '40s crooners, but their delivery of even the bleakest, most self-pitying lyrics often conveys a paradoxical (and, indeed, attractive) self-assurance. Tony Bennett doesn't *really* sound as if he left his heart in San Francisco; if he did, his audience might not find his music nearly so soothing. Country performers often seem more susceptible to the ravages of amour, so it isn't hard to believe Charlie Rich truly thinks she's The Most Beautiful Girl in the World now that she's left him; however, he still sounds capable of making emotional ends meet and carrying on. Among rock singers, only a few—Eric Clapton, Ray Davies, John Lennon—can (or care to) project vulnerability unmitigated by self-consciousness or preoccupation with style.



Leonard Cohen: passion at the core.

Leonard Cohen and Jimmy Webb, as singers even more than as songwriters, share a determination to explore their obsessive romanticism without recourse to closet pride. Though their manners and viewpoints are utterly different, almost opposite, each one's style is based upon the artist's acceptance of—and frequent revelry in—his own emotional shortcomings. It could be contended that Webb and Cohen also share a complete inability to carry even their own tunes, but there are ways in which that helps.

I saw Leonard Cohen in concert recently and thought the most remark-

able thing about his performance—even more than the thunderous ovation he received or the seven encores for which he was summoned back—was the thematic and qualitative consistency of his material. Perhaps because he began writing music relatively late (he's 41 now, came to prominence when Judy Collins recorded "Suzanne" and "Dress Rehearsal Rag" eight years ago), or perhaps because he's expressed many of the same ideas in his fiction and poetry (one of Cohen's best songs, "Famous Blue Raincoat," is a three-minute compression of his novel, *Beautiful Losers*), his songwriting has never undergone an awkward stage. The early work is as good as the latest—though, admittedly, there have been lapses in between—and all of his songs hover around a fixed set of notions. Cohen's world-view is singularly bleak, its pessimism tempered only by the fact that he keeps on trying.

"There is a war between the man and the woman," proclaims one cut on his current LP, *New Skin For The Old Ceremony*, which then goes on to console the listener sardonically: "You can still get married." "I live here with a woman and a child, the situation makes me kind of . . . nervous," frets another verse. On "Why Don't You Try," a female listener is advised to go it alone ("Do you need to hold a leash to be a lady?"), then made to witness a supremely discouraging wedding ("Their vows are difficult, they're for each other/so let no one put a loophole, a loophole in their way"). Yet despite the cynicism, Cohen's underlying faith in and reliance upon various forms of love are attested to by the passion at the core of every one of his songs; besides, he seems too riddled with self-doubt to make for a comfortable cynic. Cohen's sporadic bitterness is backhanded, having as much to do with the acknowledgment of his own romantic inadequacies as it does with his oddly poignant inability to grow weary or disillusioned.

He delivers all of this in the most paradoxically evocative monotone imaginable, dwelling as stubbornly on the flat notes as he does on the passable ones, and using improbably lighthearted arrangements and peppy girl singers to (unsuccessfully) offset the gloom. Yet if Cohen's vocals were conventionally better—and I suspect they could be, though only slightly—they might throw off his careful balance of persistence and defeat, energy and tragedy. There's something about the perverse obstinacy with which he clings to the same three or four notes, song in and song out, that lends him the illusion of staying power in the face of grievous misfortune, something about his near-whisper that imparts a grim eloquence and delicacy to the proceedings. Cohen's best songs have been sung more skillfully by others, but the understated pathos, passion, sarcasm and strain of his own renditions have kept their definitiveness unchallenged.

It should be pointed out, I suppose, that not everyone familiar with Leonard Cohen's albums shares my high

Jimmy Webb: a peculiar blend of effervescence and pain.

estimation of his vocal prowess (although his abilities as a songwriter are virtually unassailable). But I have found, through repeated and painful experience, that playing a Jimmy Webb record is an even surer way to trigger a quick exodus from one's living room. Say what you will about Cohen, but do concede that he is relatively quiet; Webb, on the other hand, favors lush, maudlin arrangements and has been known to shriek for all his vocal chords are (*not*, by any ordinary standards) worth. Webb's arrangements, like his romantic illusions, are almost embarrassingly overblown, and he writes melodies so rich and grandiose that his own vocals barely even suggest them.

Webb, even more than Cohen, is known primarily as a songwriter. In his teen-wizard days he composed "Up, Up and Away" for the Fifth Dimension (legend has it that he was accompanying some disc jockey on a publicity stunt in a balloon at the time), the two best songs Glen Campbell ever recorded ("Galveston" and "Wichita Lineman") and the unforgettably gaudy "MacArthur Park" ("Someone left the cake out in the rain," indeed!) for Richard Harris. On the basis of that last song alone, I thought myself permanently immune to Webb's much-touted charms until I finally heard one of his own records.

The album was his third (there are four), *Letters*. It opened with a slow, eerie and almost frighteningly earnest version of "Galveston" that pounded home the young soldier's ostensible unmanliness ("I am so afraid of dying . . .") with a conviction Glen Campbell would never have even considered, let alone risked revealing. On that same album Webb's version of Boudleaux Bryant's "Love Hurts"—a song that has been recorded by Roy Orbison, the Everly Brothers, Gram Parsons—seemed to emanate directly from the singer's raw nerve endings. "Love Hurts," in earlier renditions, was pretty, but it doesn't have to be; Webb's interpretation was so unlovely it was heartbreaking.

His recent *Land's End* album, which has no distinct edge over the previous three except for the fact that it's the only one still available, is overwhelmingly ambitious. Webb wants to make himself heard over his full, booming, imitation Phil Spector production on "Just This One Time," but he has to struggle so hard that the sound wall behind him becomes a challenge instead of a backdrop. He wants to sing pop ballads, and his "Crying In My Sleep" is a superb one, with a melody that should by rights be done justice by someone with suitable vocal equipment. But Webb really *does* sound like he's been weeping, in a way that few other singers can, and his very anguish makes him the right man for the job.

Yet he never strikes an altogether lachrymose pose; his voice is a peculiar blend of effervescence and pain. If Webb had more innate vocal power and a better range, he might well indulge in the same kind of sweetly gratuitous flourishes that characterize his arrangements. But he's lucky enough not to be able to spoil things; he has to pour in so much energy, pushing so hard even to grind out his songs at all, that excessive prettiness will never be a problem. And his very inability to sound the way he'd apparently like to is what makes his too-beautiful melodies so

moving, just as the undaunted and undiluted idealism of his material becomes all the more touching each time his singing runs aground on reality.

As Bob Dylan showed the world, a bad voice with character can have every advantage over a nice one without. But even an awful voice, or no voice at all, isn't necessarily a crippling disability if it can somehow be wedged into congruence with the singer's material and if the singer is willing to make enough sacrifices. Both Cohen and Webb have forged styles out of their own limitations, and both have been forced to abandon such recourses as prettiness and pride along the way. Their very inadequacies propel them to wild extremes of romanticism and vulnerability, to a daring that surer natural resources would never necessitate. Theirs are liberating weaknesses. I'm *glad* they can't sing.

*** **Cold On The Shoulder,** *Gordon Lightfoot* (Reprise). Not bad, if a bit formulaic; he repeats himself with the utmost competence and aplomb. But this album is virtually indistinguishable from the two that directly preceded it, and not quite the equal of the two before that.

* **Pieces Of the Sky,** *Emmylou Harris* (Reprise). Gifted backup singer gets promoted and can't manage under the limelight; this is a bland and (considering her past work) disappointing solo debut. Harris sounds enough like Linda Ronstadt to make this a good example of what the right (or wrong) production can do.

BOOKS

An ugly story

By Geoffrey Wolff

The Rise and Fall of the DC-10 *by John Godson.* David McKay (351 pp., $9.95).

A little less than a year ago a fully loaded DC-10 jumbo jet fell out of the sky near Paris on a Sunday afternoon and spread its bits and pieces, together with 346 passengers, around the Forest of Ermenonville. The devastation was so abrupt and so utter that at first it was assumed a bomb had exploded somewhere in the Turkish airliner bound for London, and a variety of subversives, malcontents and madmen were blamed for the evidently criminally created disaster.

When the evidence finally came in, it revealed an unnecessary holocaust caused by bureaucratic and corporate stupidity, greed, indifference and criminal lack of responsibility. The plane crashed because its cargo door blew off a few minutes after the flight left Orly. When the cargo door blew off, it caused a sudden and calamitous decompression in the cargo hold, which in turn caused the cabin floor to collapse, which in turn severed or mangled the airplane's vital controls, which led to the cockpit through a beam supporting the cabin floor.

The chain of circumstances sounds like a freak, but it was not. It was a precise duplication of an incident that had taken place almost two years earlier over Windsor, Ontario, on an American Airlines DC-10. It was only by incredible luck, and the highest skill, that the flight crew managed to bring that plane down in Detroit with no loss of life. Nor was that accident on June 12, 1972, the first of its kind experienced on a DC-10. More than two years earlier, when the prototype was being tested at McDonnell Douglas Corporation, the forward right-hand cargo door exploded open and the cabin floor collapsed. The proximate failure in all three instances was the latching mechanism for the door, but the grave design flaw is a weak cabin floor through which the airplane's most crucial controls have been led. The three accidents would never have occurred if the cargo doors opened in rather than out, because interior pressure would then force the doors against stops. But outward opening doors afford greater cargo capacity than inward opening doors, making them preferable to McDonnell Douglas and its customers.

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Firemen near the fuselage of the Turkish Airlines DC-10 jetliner.

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proper cargo door latching on that airplane, and after the fully investigated incident over Ontario, the F.A.A. did not once mandate a design change on the airplane. Not, in fact, till after the atomization of 346 people on March 3, 1974, did the F.A.A. issue obligatory instructions regarding cargo doors on DC-10s. And to this day those cargo doors open outward, and the plane's cabin floors will collapse if they fly off at moderate to high altitudes, and I wouldn't fly on a DC-10 for any reason.

John Godson, a British aviation free lance, believes the plane should be taken out of service and fundamentally redesigned. Of course, this course would be economically disastrous for McDonnell Douglas, but no less so than the multiple lawsuits that it has every just prospect of losing due to its repellent negligence in the crash on March 3rd. For the awful fact is that complicated modifications to the cargo door were designed after the Ontario near-crash, and long before the manufacturer delivered TC-JAV to the Turks. They were supposed to have been incorporated on the cargo door of the Turkish plane. Records were produced after the crash to show that the door had been modified. The records were false. The door had not been modified.

At a Senate investigation into the causes of the Paris crash, no person working for either the government or for McDonnell Douglas would confess to the slightest degree of blameworthiness. Big surprise. One mighty person after another poisoned the hearing room air with Stengelese double-talk and plain bullshit. Why was the modification not performed? The company was investigating the matter. Why was a record produced indicating that it had been performed? The company was investigating the matter. The company continues to investigate the matter. In fact, no one would be wise to the company's failure had not the unmodified cargo door, or a scrap of it, been discovered among the wreckage strewn here and there, some miles from the crash site. The motto of the company seems to be *caveat emptor,* since they gently scolded the Turks for their failure to discover that their airplane was not delivered according to its recorded specifications.

There are no good guys in this book other than the people who work for the National Transportation Safety Board, which investigates crashes and other untoward incidents and makes recommendations regarding design changes in the name of safety to the F.A.A. The F.A.A., under John Shaffer, the administrator before Alexander (we-had-a-taping-system-in-the-White-House) Butterfield took over, chose to ignore these recommendations wholesale. Why is not clear. There is bureaucratic jealousy between the Safety Board and the F.A.A., but after the Ontario door-blowing incident both the Safety Board and field administrators of the F.A.A. recommended that an Airworthiness Directive be issued, compelling design changes in the latch at the very least. Such directives are public announcements of a design failure and are displeasing to such company managers as concern themselves more with product image than product substance. So Shaffer accommodated himself, for reasons known only to himself and the president of McDonnell Douglas, to a thing called a Service Bulletin, whereby airlines were notified by mail that a modification to their cargo door was *available* to those who wrote asking for it. Many ignored the bulletin, which was not issued in any case till 4,620 planeloads of people had been exposed to the precise circumstance that caused the disintegration of the flight controls of the DC-10 over Ontario.

Shaffer was a most accommodating man. He also, as this book shows, accommodated the Beech Aircraft Corporation, and became its director three days before he ceased being administrator of the F.A.A. (To his surprise, his letter of resignation, submitted under compulsion by all high-level administrators after Nixon's 1972 victory, was accepted.) The history of the F.A.A., as told by Godson, stinks to heaven. There is no satisfactory negative reply to his question: "*Anything* that affects aviation safety should be made mandatory in the first place—should it not?"

His book is raggedly written, shrill and in places crucially in error. (He accuses McDonnell Douglas executives—falsely—of having made illegal campaign contributions that were somehow linked to the certification of the DC-10. And he submits that the cabin floor of the 747 is stronger than that of the DC-10, although it is in fact even weaker.) At least three other books telling this sorry story are currently in preparation, and they may tell it more elegantly. Meantime, Godson deserves our gratitude for warning us away from a killer.

Onassis: son of Mammon

FINAL TRIBUTE

By Mark Goodman

He was an international Horatio Alger in sunglasses and baggy suits, the runty refugee from the Greco-Turkish wars who fled to the Argentine with $60 in his pocket and eventually amassed a fortune of more than $500 million. It is a heroic story in the classic Greek tradition; the saga of little Aristotle Onassis, who took on the biggest enterprises of his time and never (well, almost never) lost. His fierce, freewheeling life brought him in touch with the greats (Winston Churchill), the near-greats (Maria Callas) and the hang-around-greats (Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy). In the end only death could conquer this magnificent Greek warrior. But does not the final, transcendent victory belong to Onassis? Because if you can't take it with you, then it follows that the gods don't get a cut.

Onassis' life is really a study of money, the ferocious pursuit of money and what money can do—a riches-to-rags-to-riches story. He was born in either 1900 or 1906, depending on whether you believe his passports or his reminiscences, in Smyrna (now Izmur), a Turkish city on the Aegean that did not take kindly to its considerable Greek population. His father, a prosperous tobacco merchant, was forced to gather his family and flee to Athens during the savage 1922 war. Young Ari decided to flee further, to Buenos Aires. He peddled Turkish tobacco from a cart and lived in self-imposed penury in a cheap boardinghouse, saving his *pesetas* for a rainy day. That day came with the Depression, after he had already built a small fortune in tobacco. "You could buy a tanker for the same price as a Rolls Royce," he was later to recall in his whimsical fashion. He bought six of them, and went on to create the largest shipping empire in global history.

Onassis would have become rich in the best of times, but the wars that have raged from 1939 to the present gave him more money than a thousand men could spend in a lifetime. He respected nothing in the world but his money and his right to wield it, and wield it he did. He gained control of at least 100 different companies of all nations—all of whom contributed flags to his ships. He may have been known as "The Golden Greek," but Greece saw precious little of his gold. "My favorite

country," super-patriot Onassis once said, "is the one that grants maximum security from taxes, trade restrictions and unreasonable regulations."

When he first married in 1946, it was to Athina Livanos, daughter of a shipping magnate even wealthier (at the time) than Onassis. When he was secure enough for that marriage to be sundered, the sundering was accomplished by *la grande liaison* of the time—with the incandescent soprano Maria Callas. He could have married Callas, or any among the perfumed tribes of international beauties who danced across his fabulous yacht *Christina* or who flattered and fawned over him at the court of Maxim's and "21." But Ari wanted what he understood to be class; and so it was that his money and power secured the brightest bauble in his collection: the internationally celebrated widow of John F. Kennedy.

Even when he lost, he somehow wound up the winner. It is often said that "Onassis did not break the bank at Monte Carlo—he bought it." But he ran up against another tough cookie in Prince Rainier over the issue of casinos (Onassis disapproved of gambling). Onassis finally sold out to the prince—at a $5 million profit. When he in effect tried to gain control of a large block of American shipping, the U.S. government slapped a civil suit on him. Ari met Justice Department officials with the cool question, "What's the ransom?"

It is hard to believe that such a man is actually dead; one would think he could have sold the gods 33 1/3 percent of his shipping interests—and thrown in Olympic Airways and the Isle of Skorpios—for a new 99-year lease on life. But at least his daughter Christina is now the world's most eligible bachelor girl (his son Alexander was killed in an air crash in 1973). And his widow can resume her lifelong sunbath in comfort.

We scorned him for the vulgarian he was, of course, but that is largely because of a central American dilemma. We are half-Puritan, half-vulgarian, sons and daughters of Jonathan Edwards and James J. Hill. Part of us hustles for the Big Buck while the other part mews homilies about money not being able to buy happiness, or love, or what have you. We are guilty about our money, and he was not. Aristotle Onassis understood—calmly, perfectly and ruthlessly—what money can buy; that short of immortality, it's Katie bar the door.●

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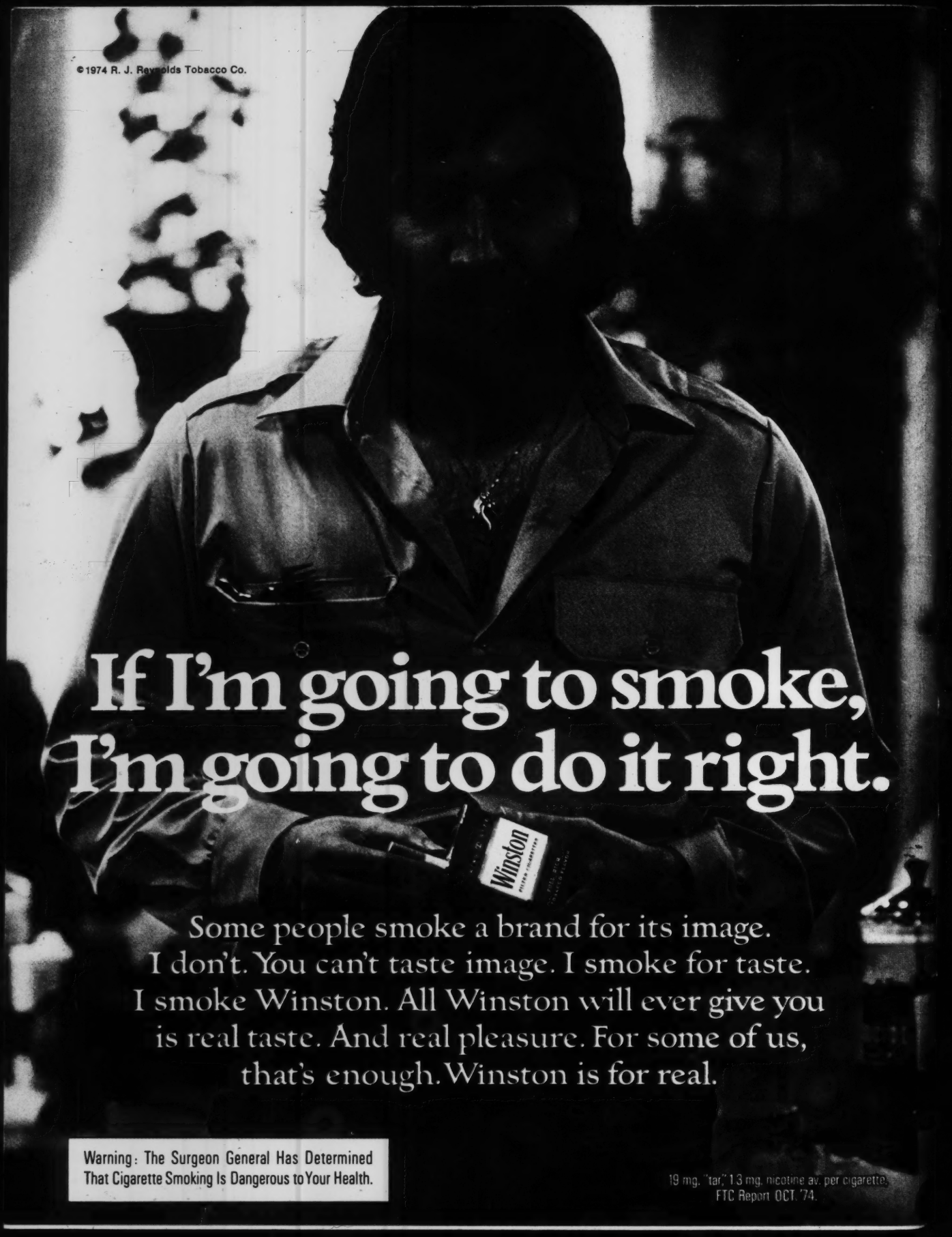
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